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"Now Exhibiting:" Charles Bird King's Picture Gallery, Fashioning American Taste and Nation 1824-1861

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“Now Exhibiting:” Charles Bird King’s Picture Gallery, Fashioning American Taste and Nation 1824-1861

by

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Dedication

For my family, each member of which has carried me through a portion of this journey.

Dorothy Knox and Tom Houghton

Kevin, Caroline, and Litty Dasch

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she reads with a pencil and not a red pen. Everything I have written would have come back to me a bloody mess. However, that is only the case because she is the consummate editor. I also thank her for giving me the space to allow the big ideas to emerge, as well as for being a sounding board every time I hit a wall. It was her interest in Benjamin West that first sent me looking at West's students. I remain stunned that more has not been written about many of the young men who traveled to London, particularly those who studied there after 1800.

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“Now Exhibiting:” Charles Bird King’s Picture Gallery, Fashioning American Taste and Nation 1824-1861

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This dissertation is an exploration of Charles Bird King’s Gallery of Paintings. The Gallery opened in 1824 and, aside from a brief hiatus in the mid-1840s, was open to the public through the end of the antebellum era. King, who trained in London at the Royal Academy and under the supervision of Benjamin West, presented to his visitors a diverse display that encompassed portraits, genre scenes, still lifes, trompe l’oeils and history paintings. Though the majority of the paintings on display were his original works across these various genres, at least one third of the collection was made up of copies after the works of European masters as well as after the American portraitist Gilbert Stuart.

This study is divided into four chapters. In the first, I explore late Colonial and Early Republic public displays of the visual arts. My analysis demonstrates that King’s Gallery was in step with a tradition of viewing that stretched back to John Smibert’s Boston studio in the mid-eighteenth century and created a visual continuity into the mid-nineteenth century. In a second chapter, focused on portraiture, I examine what it meant

to King and to his visitors to be "American." The group of men and women King displayed in his Gallery was far more diverse than typical for the time period. King included many prominent politicians, but no American President after John Quincy Adams (whom King had painted before Adams' election). Instead he featured portraits of many men of commerce as well as prominent women and numerous American Indians. In the third chapter, I look at a group of King's original compositions, genre paintings. King's style in this category was clearly indebted to seventeenth-century Dutch tradition as filtered through an eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century British lens, in particular the works of Sir David Wilkie. My final chapter continues the exploration of Dutch influences over King's work. These paintings draw together the themes of King's sense of humor, his attitudes towards patronage and his methods of circumventing inadequate patronage through the establishment of the Gallery. Finally, they prompt us to reconsider the importance of European precedents in our understanding of how artists and viewers worked together to establish an American visual cultural dialogue.

Table of Contents

List of Illustrations xii

Introduction 1

Painter and Gallery Proprietor in the Nation's Capital 7

The Later Years of the Gallery 15

King's Legacy 18

Structure of the Study 22

Chapter One – Paintings and other Curiosities: The Art of Staging Public Exhibitions in Colonial and Early Republic America 27

Public Art Venues in the Colonial and Early Republic Periods 32

The Picture Circuit 83

Charles Bird King's Gallery: More Than Just a "Genteel Resort" 96

Conclusion 114

Chapter Two – "Living Likenesses": Portraits for King's Gallery of Paintings 117

Portraits for the Gallery 120

Heroes of the Nation, Men and Women of Washington, and Fancy Pieces 124

King and the American Indian Portraits 135

Ways of Viewing – Physiognomy, Phrenology, and the Nineteenth Century American Audience 148

Physiognomy 149

Phrenology 159

Case Study: Young Omahaw, War Eagle, Little Missouri, and Pawnee through the lenses of Physiognomy and Phrenology 170

Conclusion 178

Chapter Three – Charles Bird King's Genre Paintings: American Life Seen through the lens of Dutch Art 181

Genre Painting in the Early Republic 186

Itinerant Artist and Rip Van Winkle Returning From a Morning's Lounge – An American Morality Tale 194

Interior of a Ropewalk – Nostalgia in the Face of Industrialization.....226
Conclusion 234

Conclusion – Decoding the Trompe l'oeil "Deception:" Constructing an American Gallery of Paintings 236
Visiting Mr. K—, A Peep Behind the Curtain.....237
Emblematic Tradition in American Art 253

Appendix One – Charles Bird King Gifts to Redwood Library 251
Pre-1859 Gifts (listed in the July 1, 1859 Redwood Library Catalogue) ...252
1861 Gift 259
1862 Bequest.....263
1885 Catalogue Paintings with no Earlier Correspondence 268

Appendix Two - Illustrations 270

Bibliography 324
Primary Sources: 324
Contemporary Periodicals:.....325
Secondary Sources: 331

List of Illustrations

Figure 1. Edward Savage, *The Washington Family,* 1796. National Gallery of Art, Mellon Collection.

Figure 2. Charles Willson Peale, *The Artist in His Museum,* 1822. Oil on canvas, 103 ¾ x 79 7/8 in. Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts collection.

Figure 3. John Vanderlyn, *Ariadne Asleep on the Island of Naxos,* 1809-1814. Oil on canvas, 68 ½ x 87 in. Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts collection.

Figure 4. John Vanderlyn, *Marius Amidst the Ruins of Carthage,* n.d. Oil on canvas, 87 x 68 ½ in. M. H. De Young Memorial Museum collection.

Figure 5. John Vanderlyn, *The Palace and Gardens of Versailles,* det., 1818-1819. Oil on canvas, 12 x 165 ft. overall. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of the Senate House Association, Kingston, N.Y., 1952.

Figure 6. Rembrandt Peale, *The Roman Daughter,* 1811. Oil on canvas, 84 ¾ x 62 7/8 in. Smithsonian American Art Museum, gift of the James Smithson Society.

Figure 7. Theodore Gericault, *Wreck of the Frigate Ship Medusa,* 1819. Oil on canvas, approximately 16 x 23 ½ ft. Musée du Louvre collection.

Figure 8. Rembrandt Peale, *The Court of Death,* 1820. Oil on canvas, 138 x 281 in. The Detroit Institute of Arts collection, gift of George H. Scripps.

Figure 9. Thomas Sully, *The Interior of the Capuchin Chapel in the Piazza Barberini (after Marius Granet),* 1821. Oil on canvas, 68.5 x 50.5 in. Private collection. Reproduced from www.the-athenaeum.org/art/detail.php?ID=16352.

Figure 10. Henry Sargent, *The Dinner Party,* c. 1821. Oil on canvas, 61 5/8 x 49 ¾ in. The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, gift of Mrs. Horatio A. Lamb in memory of Mr. and Mrs. Winthrop Sargent.

Figure 11. Paul Delaroche, with Charles Béranger, *Hémicycle des Beaux-Arts,* c. 1841; repainted and signed 1853. Oil on canvas, 41.6 x 257.3 cm. The Walters Art Museum, bequest of Henry Walters, 1931.

Figure 12. Charles Bird King, *Head after Van Dyck,* n.d. Private collection. Photograph courtesy of William Vareika Fine Arts, Newport, Rhode Island.

Figure 13. Paulus Pontius after Anthony van Dyck, *Hendrick van den Bergh,* engraving, 14 x 11 3/8 in. Engraving in the collection of the Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island.

Figure 14. Engraving after Sir Thomas Lawrence, *The Calmady Children,* n.d. Engraving in the collection of the Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island.

Figure 15. Charles Bird King, *The Calmady Children (after Sir Thomas Lawerence),* c. 1835. Oil on canvas, 33 x 30 in. Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island.

Figure 16. Engraving after Sir Joshua Reynolds, *A Gypsey Boy,* n.d. Engraving in the collection of the Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island.

Figure 17. Engraving after Sir Joshua Reynolds, *The Fortune Teller,* n.d. Engraving in the collection of the Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island.

Figure 18. Engraving after Sir Joshua Reynolds, *The Strawberry Girl,* n.d. Engraving in the collection of the Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island.

Figure 19. Engraving after Sir Joshua Reynolds, *Infant St. John,* n.d. Engraving in the collection of the Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island.

Figure 20. Engraving after Sir Anthony van Dyck, *Earl of Warwick,* n.d. Engraving in the collection of the Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island.

Figure 21. Engraving after Correggio, *Sigismunda with the Heart of the Lover,* n.d. Engraving in the collection of the Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island.

Figure 22. Engraving of cartoon after Raphael, *Elymas, the Sorcerer,* n.d. Engraving in the collection of the Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island.

Figure 23. Charles Bird King, *Grandfather's Hobby,* c. 1824-1830. Oil on canavs, 36 ¼ x 28 ¼ in. The Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, Winterthur, Delaware.

Figure 24. Engraving after Villeneuve, *Vue Prise en Savoi,* n.d. Engraving in the collection of the Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island.

Figure 25. Richard Wilson, *Ceyx and Alcyone,* 1768. Oil on canvas, 101.5 x 127 cm. National Museum, Wales.

Figure 26. Benjamin West, *Telemachus and Mentor, Shipwrecked on the Isle of Calypso.* Oil on canvas, approximately 43 x 56 in. Collection Travis & Calhoun Attorneys and Counselors, Dallas, TX.

Figure 27. Sir Joshua Reynolds, *John Hunter,* 1786. Collection The Crystal Gallery, Hunterian Museum.

Figure 28. Sir Joshua Reynolds, *Lord Crewe, in the Character of Henry VIII*, 1775. Oil on canvas, 55.1 x 43.3 in. Private collection.

Figure 29. Charles Willson Peale, *Rachel Weeping,* 1772; enlarged 1777, retouched 1818. Oil on canvas, 36 13/16 x 32 1/16 in. Philadelphia Museum of Art, gift of The Barra Foundation, Inc., 1977.

Figure 30. Charles Willson Peale, *Exhumation of the Mastadon,* 1806-1808. Oil on canvas, 50 x 62 ½ in. Baltimore City Life Museum Collection, Maryland Historical Society.

Figure 31. Charles Bird King, *John Quincy Adams,* 1819-1821. Oil on canvas, 36 x 28 in. Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island.

Figure 32. Charles Bird King, *John C. Calhoun,* 1818-1820. Oil on canvas, 36 x 28 in. Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island.

Figure 33. Charles Bird King, *John Adams (after Gilbert Stuart),* 1827. Oil on canvas, 30 x 25 in. Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island.

Figure 34. Charles Bird King, *Thomas Jefferson Medallion Portrait (after Gilbert Stuart),* n.d. Oil on wood, 21 x 17 in. Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island.

Figure 35. Charles Bird King, *Mrs. Delia Stewart (after Gilbert Stuart),* n.d. Oil on India silk, 18 x 14 in. Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island.

Figure 36. Charles Bird King, *Mrs. Joseph Lovel,* n.d. Oil on canvas, 24 x 20 in. Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island.

Figure 37. Charles Bird King, *Mrs. Stockton, of Virginia,* n.d. Oil on canvas, 30 x 25 in. Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island.

Figure 38. Charles Bird King, *Margaret Bayard (Mrs. Samuel Harrison) Smith,* 1829. Oil on canvas, 30 x 25 in. Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island.

Figure 39. Charles Bird King, *Costume, Time of Charlemagne,* c. 1838. Oil on canvas, 30 x 25 in. Private collection (Cosentino, *Paintings of Charles Bird King,* Cat. No. 609).

Figure 40. Charles Bird King, *The Castle-Builder,* 1829. Oil on canvas, 30 x 25 in. Private Collection (Cosentino, *Paintings of Charles Bird King,* Cat. No. 605).

Figure 41. Charles Bird King, *Louisa Catherine Johnson (Mrs. John Quincy) Adams,* c. 1824. Oil on canvas, 51 ½ x 39 5/8 in. Smithsonian American Art Museum Adams-Clement Collection, gift of Mary Louisa Adams Clement in memory of her mother, Louisa Catherine Adams Clement.

Figure 42. Charles Bird King, *Henry Clay,* 1821. Oil on canvas, 36 1/8 x 28 1/8 in. Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

Figure 43. Charles Bird King, *Miss Satterlee,* c. 1830-1839. Oil on wood, 17 ½ x 14 ½ in. Smithsonian American Art Museum, gift of Albert M. Pitcher, Jr.

Figure 44. Charles Bird King, *Gertrude Murray Shepard,* c. 1840. Oil on canvas, 36 x 30 in. Collection William B. Shepard, Edenton, N.C. (Cosentino, *Paintings of Charles Bird King*, Cat. No. 235).

Figure 45. Charles Bird King, *Indian Girl at Her Toilet,* c. 1835. Oil on canvas, 26 ½ x 21 ¾ in. Private collection (Cosentino, *The Paintings of Charles Bird King*, Cat. No. 620).

Figure 46. Charles Bird King, *Young Omahaw, War Eagle, Little Missouri, and Pawnees,* 1822. Oil on canvas, 28 x 36 1/8 in. Smithsonian American Art Museum, gift of Miss Helen Barlow.

Figure 47. Charles Bird King, *Hayne Hudjihini*, 1822. Oil on wood, 17 x 13 ¾ in. Current location unknown.

Figure 48. Charles Bird King, *Shaumonekusse,* 1822. Oil on wood, 17 ½ x 13 ½ in. Current location unknown.

Figure 49. Charles Bird King, *Petalesharro (Generous Chief),* 1822. Oil on wood, 17 ½ x 13 ¾ in. Current location unknown.

Figure 50. Charles Bird King, *Ongpatonga (Big Elk),* 1822. Oil on wood, 17 ½ x 13 ¾ in. Newberry Library, Chicago, IL.

Figure 51. Charles Bird King, *Rantchewaime (Female Flying Pigeon),* 1824. Oil on wood, 17 ½ x 13 ½ in. Current location unknown.

Figure 52. Charles Bird King, *Choncape (Big Kansas),* 1822. Oil on wood, 17 ½ x 13 ¾ in. Danish National Museum, Copenhagen.

Figure 53. Charles Bird King, *Pushmataha,* 1824. Oil on Wood, 17 ¼ x 13 ¼ in. Current location unknown.

Figure 54. Lithograph after Charles Bird King, *Pushmataha,* 1836-1844. Published in Thomas L. McKenney and James Hall, *History of the Indian Tribes of North America, with Biographical Sketches and Anecdotes of the Principal Chiefs. Embellished with One Hundred and Twenty Portraits, from the Indian Gallery in the Department of War, at Washington.* 3 vols. Philadelphia, 1836-1844.

Figure 55. Charles Bird King, *Nesouaquoit (Bear in the Fork of a Tree),* 1837. Oil on canvas, 35 ½ x 29 ½ in. Stark Museum of Art, Orange, TX.

Figure 56. Charles Bird King, *Keokuk (Watchful Fox),* 1829. Oil on canvas, 38 ½ x 26 ½ in. Current location unknown.

Figure 57. Lithograph after James Otto Lewis, *Keokuk,* 1835. Published in James Otto Lewis, *Aboriginal Port-Folio* (Philadelphia: 1835).

Figure 58. Charles Bird King, *Wanata (after James Otto Lewis),* 1826. Oil on canvas, 38 ½ x 26 ½ in. Current location unknown.

Figure 59. Lithograph after James Otto Lewis, *Wanata,* 1835. Published in James Otto Lewis, *Aboriginal Port-Folio* (Philadelphia: 1835).

Figure 60. Charles Bird King, *Keokuk,* 1827. Oil on wood, 17 ½ x 13 ¾ in. Current location unknown.

Figure 61. Lithograph after Charles Bird King, *Keokuk,* 1836-1844. Published in Thomas L. McKenney and James Hall, *History of the Indian Tribes of North America, with Biographical Sketches and Anecdotes of the Principal Chiefs. Embellished with One Hundred and Twenty Portraits, from the Indian Gallery in the Department of War, at Washington.* 3 vols. Philadelphia, 1836-1844.

Figure 62. Thomas Easterly, *Keokuk,* 1847. Daguerreotype. National Museum of American History, Behring Center, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

Figure 63. Johann Caspar Lavater, *Plate with Profiles,* 1800. Johann Caspar Lavater, *The Whole Works of Lavater on Physiognomy* (London: printed for W. Butters, & sold by W. Simmonds, Paternoster Row, 1800) Volume IV, 45 (opposite p.245).

Figure 64. Charles Bird King, *Charles Carroll,* n.d. Oil on canvas, 30 x 28 in. Private Collection (Cosentino, *The Paintings of Charles Bird King,* Cat. No. 32).

Figure 65. Charles Bird King, *William Henry Crawford, Secretary of Treasury,* 1817-1824. Oil on canvas, 37 x 28 in. Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island.

Figure 66. Frontisepiece from O.S. Fowler, *The Practical Phrenologist* (Boston: O.S. Fowler, 1869).

Figure 67. Asa Ames, *Phrenological Head,* c. 1850. Paint on wood, 16 3/8 x 13 x 7 1/8 in. American Folk Art Museum, bequest of Jeanette Virgin.

Figure 68. Charles Bird King, *Self-Portrait,* 1815. Oil on canvas, 30 x 25 in. Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island.

Figure 69. Charles Bird King, *Makataimeshekiakiah (Black Hawk),* 1833. Oil on wood, 23 x 19 ¾ in. Current location unknown.

Figure 70. Plate accompanying the essay "Phrenological Developments and Character of the Celebrated Indian Chief and Warrior, Black Hawk," *American Phrenological Journal and Miscellany* I (1838): 52-53.

Figure 71. Lithograph after James Otto Lewis, *Nah-Shaw-a-Gaa (The White Dog's Son, Pottawatomie Chief),* 1835. Published in James Otto Lewis, *Aboriginal Port-Folio* (Philadelphia: 1835).

Figure 72. John Valentine Haidt, *The First Fruits,* n.d. Oil on canvas, 41 ½ x 50 ½ in. Archives of the Moravian Church, Bethlehem, PA.

Figure 73. Charles Willson Peale, *Thayendanegea (Joseph Brant),* 1797. Oil on canvas, 25 ½ x 21 3/8 in. Independence Hall, Philadelphia, PA.

Figure 74. Sir Anthony van Dyck, *Charles I,* c. 1635. Oil on canvas, 33 ¼ x 39 ¼ in. The Queen's Gallery, London.

Figure 75. Charles Bird King, *Peskelechaco,* 1822. Oil on wood, 17 ½ x 13 ¾ in. Collection William J. Williams, Cincinnati, OH (Cosentino, *The Paintings of Charles Bird King,* Cat. No. 411).

Figure 76. Charles Bird King, *Itinerant Artist,* c. 1825. Oil on canvas, 44 ¾ x 57 in. New York State Historical Association.

Figure 77. Charles Bird King, *Rip Van Winkle Returning from a Morning's Lounge,* c. 1825. Oil on canvas, 44 x 56 ¼ in. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, bequest of Maxim Karolik.

Figure 78. Charles Bird King, *Interior of a Ropewalk,* c. 1840. Oil on canvas, 39 x 54 ½ in. University of Virginia Art Museum, Charlottesville, VA.

Figure 79. Engraving after Adriaen van Ostade, *Tavern Scene,* n.d. Engraving in the collection of the Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island.

Figure 80. Undated nineteenth-century photograph, main reading room of the Redwood Library and Athenaeum. Photograph in the collection of the Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island.

Figure 81. Sir David Wilkie, *Village Politicians,* 1806. Oil on canvas, 57.2 x 74.9 cm. Collection of the Rt. Hon. The Earl of Mansfield and Mansfield.

Figure 82. Sir David Wilkie, *Blind Fiddler,* 1806. Oil on panel, 57.8 x 79.4 cm. Tate Gallery, London, UK.

Figure 83. John Lewis Krimmel, *Pepper-Pot: A Scene in the Philadelphia Market,* 1811. Oil on canvas, 19 ½ x 15 ½ in. Philadelphia Museum of Art, gift of Mrs. And Mrs. Edward B. Leisenring, Jr.

Figure 84. John Lewis Krimmel, *Blind Fiddler (after Sir David Wilkie),* 1812. Oil on canvas, 16 5/8 x 22 1/16 in. Terra Foundation for American Art, Daniel J. Terra Collection.

Figure 85. John Lewis Krimmel, *Quilting Frolic,* 1813. Oil on canvas, 16 ¾ x 22 3/16 in. The Henry Francis DuPont Winterthur Museum.

Figure 86. Jan Steen, *The Dissolute Household,* c. 1663-1664. Oil on canvas, 42 ½ x 35 ½ in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Jack and Bell Linsky Collection.

Figure 87. Etching and engraving after William Hogarth, *The Rake's Progress: Plate I,* 1735. 12 9/16 x 15 3/8 in. British Museum.

Figure 88. Gerrit Dou, *Still Life with a Boy Blowing Soap-bubbles,* c. 1635-1636. Oil on panel, 48 x 39.7 cm. National Museum of Western Art, Tokyo.

Figure 89. Frans van Mieris, *A Boy Blowing Bubbles,* 1663. Oil on panel, 25.5 x 19 cm. Royal Picture Gallery Mauritshuis, The Hague.

Figure 90. John Lewis Krimmel, *View of Center Square on the Fourth of July,* 1812. Oil on canvas, 23 x 29 1/8 in. The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts.

Figure 91. John Lewis Krimmel, *Merrymaking at a Wayside Inn,* 1811-1813. Watercolor and graphite on white laid paper, 7 1/8 x 9 3/16 in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund.

Figure 92. John Lewis Krimmel, *Black People's Prayer Meeting,* 1811-1813. Watercolor and pen and black ink on off-white wove paper, 6 9/16 x 9 15/16 in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund.

Figure 93. William Sidney Mount, *The Power of Music,* 1847. Oil on canvas, 17 x 21 in. The Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland, OH.

Figure 94. John Lewis Krimmel, *Election Scene. State House in Philadelphia,* 1815. Oil on canvas, 16 x 25 in. The Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum.

Figure 95. Charles Bird King, *Landscape with Catalogue,* 1828. Oil on canvas, 30 x 25 in. Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island.

Figure 96. Charles Willson Peale, *Staircase Group,* 1795. Oil on cavas, 89 ½ x 39 3/8 in. Philadelphia Museum of Art, the George W. Elkins Collection.

Figure 97. Raphael Peale, *Venus Rising from the Sea – A Deception,* c. 1822. Oil on canvas, 29 1/8 x 24 1/8 in. The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, William Rockhill Nelson Trust.

Figure 98. Frederick Edwin Church, *Heart of the Andes,* 1859. Oil on canvas, 66 1/8 x 119 ¼ in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, bequest of Margaret E. Dows.

Figure 99. Charles Bird King, *Poor Artist's Cupboard,* c. 1815. Oil on panel, 29 13/16 x 27 13/16 in. Corcoran Gallery of Art.

Figure 100. Charles Bird King, *Vanity of the Artist's Dream,* 1830. Oil and graphite on canvas, 35 1/8 x 37 ¼ x 2 in. Harvard Art Museums/Fogg Museum, Gift of Grenville L. Winthrop, Class of 1886.

Figure 101. Charles Bird King, *Self-Portrait,* 1856-1858. Oil on canvas, 44 ½ x 34 in. Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island.

Figure 102. Charles Bird King, *Harper's Ferry, Looking Upstream,* c. 1815-1820. Oil on wood, 17 ¼ x 30 in. Unlocated (Cosentino, *The Paintings of Charles Bird King,* Cat. No. 509).

Figure 103. Charles Bird King, *Harper's Ferry, Government Work Lock on the Potomac,* c. 1815-1820. Oil on wood, 17 ¼ x 30 in. Unlocated (Cosentino, *The Paintings of Charles Bird King,* Cat. No. 508).

Figure 104. William Sidney Mount, *Bargaining for a Horse (Farmers Bargaining),* 1835. Oil on canvas, 24 x 30 in. New-York Historical Society, gift of the New-York Gallery of the Fine Arts.

Introduction

In June of 1824, American artist Charles Willson Peale visited Washington, D. C. on business. In a moment of leisure between appointments Peale, a man of prodigious energy and expansive interests, turned towards the studio of Charles Bird King. He later recounted in his autobiography that he

> was much surprised to see so many Pictures, which testified the great industry of the Artist. [sic] for he had not only painted a great many portraits but also Landscapes, pieces of Still life and some imblematical [sic] subjects.[1]

Peale's remarks were among the earliest references to King's Gallery of Paintings, a for-profit picture gallery the artist maintained aside from a brief hiatus in the 1840s from 1824 to 1861.[2] During that period, King's Gallery was the only cultural outlet of its kind in Washington.

Peale's description shows King's establishment to have been a multi-faceted visual arts experience, much more than a portrait gallery. King's exclusive focus on the visual arts and his resistance to branching out into natural curiosities, medical or technological experiments, or ethnological exhibitions (as did other period museum proprietors) rendered the collection even more unusual in the early United States. And the Gallery was unique in its longevity. Despite the evident importance of the Gallery to nineteenth-century Washington, D.C., Charles Bird King was and remains known today primarily as a portraitist. Though King supported himself financially through portraiture, and was only commissioned to produce a handful of paintings in other genres, to refer to him as a portraitist denies the important role he and his Gallery played in the dialogue

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[1] Charles Willson Peale, *The Autobiography of Charles Willson Peale*, ed. Lillian B. Miller, Sidney Hart, and Toby A. Appel, *The Selected Papers of Charles Willson Peale and His Family*, Vol. V (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press for the National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, 1983) 461.

[2] While it is unclear exactly when King opened the Gallery, it was certainly open by the end of 1824, when the Washington *National Intelligencer* ran a puff piece.

surrounding the visual arts in nineteenth-century America. The types of works King displayed, with his emphasis on European masterworks and styles, were a countervailing trend to the nationalist American styles and subjects the art historical canon has embraced from that time to the present. The Gallery, and its influential role in nineteenth-century American visual culture, will form the subject of the chapters that follow.

Early Life and Career

Born in 1785 in Newport, Rhode Island, Charles Bird King came of age at a transitional moment in American political and cultural history. King did not live through the American Revolution, but his early years were informed by post-colonial culture in an era still very much influenced by the generation of the Founding Fathers. King's professional training reflects the degree to which he was a child of the eighteenth century. King spent time at the Moravian Boys' School in Nazareth, Pennsylvania in the late 1790s.[3] Though King was not known as an adult to follow any particular faith, as a youth he attended services in Newport when he was not in school in Pennsylvania, and his later sympathetic portrayals of American Indians evidence the influence of Moravian teachings.[4] At age fifteen, King's family apprenticed him to Edward Savage, a portraitist

[3] The dates of King's residence in Pennsylvania are unknown. The only specific reference appears in a letter that his cousin David King sent to his own mother in January 1800, just before King returned to Newport and then departed again for the studio of Edward Savage in New York. The letter, dated 1/1/1800 with a postscript dated 1/6/1800 that also referred to King, is in the collection of the Newport Historical Society. In the letter, David King refers to both Bethlehem and Nazareth, Pennsylvania and appears to have been unsure in which town King was residing. Both towns had Moravian schools, but the school in Nazareth, called the Academy at Nazareth Hall, was the more robust boarding school. Between 1785 and 1802, 163 boys were admitted, 65 of who were Moravian. Whether King was or was not Moravian, he would have had more in common with other boarders than with day students, as he was not of German descent. King's mother married Nicholas Garrison, a member of the United Brethren (or Moravian Church) on March 2, 1800. Her prior religious affiliation is unknown, but considering King's father fought in the American Revolution, it is unlikely that he was himself a Moravian, as they were pacifists. Mabel Haller, *Early Moravian Education in Pennsylvania* (Nazareth, Pennsylvania: Moravian Historical Society, 1953) [reprint of Haller's Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1951].

[4] King's childhood friend George Channing recalled in a memoir late in life that he attended services at the Moravian Church in Newport with King. Services took place in an upper room of the home of the minister,

and museum proprietor in New York who had trained in London with Benjamin West. Savage was a critical early model for King and his influence surfaced perceptibly in the younger artist's decision to establish his Gallery of Paintings. Savage was proprietor of his own museum and picture gallery while King was his apprentice, the Columbian Gallery in New York City.

In 1805, his apprenticeship concluded, King took the next logical step for an American artist: study in London with Benjamin West and at the Royal Academy. Beginning with West's departure for Italy in 1760, nearly every American artist of ambition who could find the means had traveled to Europe to see ancient and later masterworks and to London, usually, for formal academic training. King was among the final generation of Americans to stay in London for a significant period of time; others there included his friends and colleagues Thomas Sully and Washington Allston. By studying in London, King joined a small coterie of American artists who shared international training and experience. Among others, Charles Willson Peale, Gilbert Stuart, John Trumbull, and William Dunlap, the first historian of American art, had preceded him. These artists commanded a large portion of late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth-century American patronage. Significantly, almost all of them tested the American public's willingness to support the arts and artists by charging admission fees for big-picture exhibitions, a type of entertainment with which they became familiar during their stays in London. King's status as a member of this group would prove beneficial to him in the promotion of his picture gallery. He frequently devoted space to revenue-generating single picture exhibitions and he displayed multiple paintings by both Sully and Dunlap.

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and included "love-feasts" of cups of chocolate with savory buns. Adults and children attended the services together. George G. Channing, *Early Recollections of Newport, R. I., from the year 1798 to 1811* (Newport, R.I.: A. J. Ward; Charles E. Hammet, Jr., 1868) 108-109.

American art historical scholarship has focused on Benjamin West's exceptional rise in status in London as Historical Painter to the King and second president of the Royal Academy as well as on his influence over American artistic development in the last quarter of the eighteenth and first fifteen years of the nineteenth centuries.[5] Research has focused on American artists' training with West rather than on the impact of the longevity of their careers. In fact, the artists who trained with West in London returned home to long and profitable careers and their bodies of work remained before the public well into the nineteenth century. Despite the historical record, within the field there is a perception that West's influence and the eighteenth-century British Enlightenment-influenced style popular when the younger American artists were studying in London waned with his death in 1820. In actuality, John Trumbull only received his commission for the monumental United States Capitol Rotunda paintings in January 1817 and they were not installed until November 1826. Thomas Sully lived until 1872 and Charles Bird King until 1862. William Dunlap toured dramatic, large-scale history paintings along the East Coast in the 1820s and 1830s. Numerous paintings by these artists did not disappear into private collections but remained readily available to the public through the first half of the nineteenth century. In Trumbull's case, his installation at the Capitol and in the gallery that Yale University established in 1832 to house his personal collection ensured that many of his paintings remained accessible to the public well past his death.

King passed his time in London acquiring a general education that would give him the flexibility to work in any genre. He painted at least one history painting, a copy after Benjamin West's *Telemachus and Calypso on the Island of Mentor*. He also

[5] For this latter subject, which is most pertinent to the professional milieu in which King participated, see in particular Dorinda Evans, *Benjamin West and his American Students* (Washington, D.C.: National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution Press, 1980) and Susan Rather, "A Painter's Progress: Matthew Pratt and the American School," *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 28 (1993) 169-183.

appears to have been drawn to various types of Dutch paintings. He completed one trompe l'oeil, at least one and possibly two genre scenes of children with bubbles, and another genre scene of an English village inn. These paintings, as well as the formidable print collection he began while studying abroad, show King to have had broad interests as well as aspirations to a multi-faceted painting career.

King also studied portraiture, the most reliable income source for an American painter in the early nineteenth century. He copied at least two portraits, both after Sir Joshua Reynolds: *John Hunter* and *Lord Crewe in the Character of Henry VIII*.[6] King's copies are lost, but both of Reynolds' originals survive. The young artist's appreciation of Reynolds' style is evident from his use of these works as training exercises, but perhaps more convincingly from the 35 reproductive prints he collected after Reynolds' portraits. *Lord Crewe* depicts the young Master Crewe at the age of three, dressed in the manner of Henry VIII as he had been painted by Hans Holbein. Horace Walpole referred to the "humour and satire" of Reynolds' painting, which he described as "reducing Holbein's swaggering and colossal haughtiness of Henry VIII to the boyish jollity of Master Crewe."[7] *Lord Crewe* fits in to a general interest in children that King exhibited over the course of his career. Aside from commissioned portraits, which presumably he did not seek out, King painted numerous fancy pieces and genre paintings of children and

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[6] Charles Robert Leslie, *Autobiographical Recollections*, 51, notes that students frequently copied Reynolds' *Hunter* in the collections of the British Institution. Cited by Andrew J. Cosentino, *The Paintings of Charles Bird King (1785-1862)* (Washington, D. C.: Smithsonian Institution for the National Collection of Fine Arts, 1977) 136. King presented *Lord Crewe*, now unlocated, to the Redwood Library, in 1862. The disposition of *John Hunter* is unknown; it never appears in the Redwood Library's files as included in their collections. However, the Newport *Daily News* referred to this copy specifically in its obituary of Charles Bird King on March 20, 1862 as "one of the best copies among the students of West…it is admirable in every respect," suggesting that if the painting was not in Newport, had been visible enough within King's Gallery to attract notice.

[7] Numerous authors reproduced Walpole's comments, which originally appeared as a footnote in an advertisement for the fourth volume of his *Anecdotes of Painting.* For one example, see *Hibernian Magazine* (February, 1783): 63. Also reproduced in Martin Postle, ed., *Joshua Reynolds: the Creation of Celebrity* (London: Tate Pub., 2005) 208.

at least 5 copies of Reynolds' portraits of children over the course of his career. King esteemed his copy of *Lord Crewe* enough to submit it to the 1813 Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts Annual Exhibition. He also kept the painting in his collection until the end of his life. The other portrait King painted after Reynolds while in London, *John Hunter*, also remained in King's collection through the end of his life. While Reynolds' portrait of *Lord Crewe* was playful, his portrait of *John Hunter* was gruesome. Reynolds painted the famous surgeon and anatomist against the backdrop of the bones of an Irish giant and the metacarpal bone of an ass, flayed open to display the arteries. On the desk sits a specimen of a bronchial tree.[8] The *National Intelligencer* singled out this painting for mention in its obituary of the artist, a likely indication that King held the copy in high regard throughout his career, and the press similarly regarded it as a notable work.[9]

When King returned to the United States at the end of 1811, he gravitated initially to the artistic center of the young Republic – Philadelphia. We know that in 1812, King joined with Thomas Sully, John Lewis Krimmel and other artists in a Sketch Club and took anatomy classes at the PAFA.[10] Unfortunately King quickly met the same difficulty most American artists faced in the early nineteenth century, and particularly during moments of financial uncertainty such as that brought on by the War of 1812: inadequate patronage. The sardonic bitterness of his c. 1815 *Poor Artist's Cupboard*, which decries wealthy Americans' failure to adequately support local artists, speaks to artists' struggles

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[8] Lord Brock, "Background Details in Reynolds's Portrait of John Hunter," *Annals of the Royal College of Surgeons of England* 48.1 (April 1971): 223 [219-226].

[9] The *National Intelligencer* wrote that *John Hunter* is "one of the best copies among the students of West…it is admirable in every respect." "The Late Charles B. King," *Daily National Intelligencer*, March 28, 1862, page 1.

[10] "Philadelphia, December 1812. The following persons -- Remb't Peale, Charles B. King, Krimmel, Gideon Fairman, Wm. Greene of the Virginia Theater, John Clifton and Thos. Sully constituted a club for the purpose of making designs. They met once a week in Mr. Sully's painting room, and from some passage read by one of the club, from the work of some author promiscuously taken up, a design was executed by each one of the company. Two hours were allowed...." *Fifty Sketches and Studies for Portraits by Thomas Sully, 1783-1872, From an Old Sketchbook* (New York: Ehrich Galleries, 1924) No. 39.

to make ends meet. We know little about King's life before he settled permanently in Washington, D.C. at the end of the decade, outside of glancing references to residence in different cities. Though Philadelphia was home to a rich community or artists and intellectuals, King abandoned it to travel between regional centers in search of commissions. He exhibited in the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts (PAFA) Annual Exhibition in 1813 and 1814, the first year with a listed residence of Philadelphia. By the next year he had relocated to Richmond, Virginia.[11] In 1815, King moved on to Baltimore, Maryland, which the PAFA catalogue provided as his residence still the next time he exhibited, in 1817.[12] 1818 found King in Washington, D.C.

PAINTER AND GALLERY PROPRIETOR IN THE NATION'S CAPITAL

When Congress selected Washington City as the permanent home of the federal government in 1790, the ten-square-mile area was barren and swamp-like. Thirty years later, close to the time of King's arrival, the 1820 United States Census recorded 13,247 residents in Washington City. In comparison, Philadelphia numbered 63,802 residents in 1820. Aside from the monumental Capitol and White House, both undergoing reconstruction in the wake of British burning of Washington in 1814, the city offered few embellishments to attract visitors. As late as 1840, the French Chevalier de Bacourt wrote of domestic architecture in Washington:

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[11] After King left Philadelphia, he did not continue to exhibit works annually. Portraits by King appeared in the 1817, 1818, 1822 and 1823 PAFA annual exhibitions, but in each of these cases the works were those that he produced for Joseph Delaplaine. Thus, King may not have submitted the paintings himself, in particular considering his address was inaccurate in the catalogue, which locates him in Baltimore between 1817 and 1825, despite the fact that he settled in Washington, D.C. in 1818. King also exhibited portraits in 1825, 1830, 1831, and 1832 (and in subsequent years a portrait of *John Quincy Adams* continued to exhibit, likely from a private collection). Anna Wells Rutledge, *The Annual Exhibition Record of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts 1807-1870* (Madison, CT: Sound View Press, 1988) 114.

[12] A letter from Samuel F. B. Morse to King dated December 30, 1815 addressed the artist at 79 High Street, Baltimore. The letter is on file at The New-York Historical Society, New York, and is cited by Cosentino, *The Paintings of Charles Bird King*, fn. 46.

> The houses have but one story above the ground-floor, are all of red brick, and have a mean appearance; they are too much spread out for their twenty-five thousand inhabitants.[13]

The burning of Washington provided the federal government with a new opportunity to commission artwork, though it did not extend its patronage beyond the Capitol building, which by the 1820s featured a variety of painted and sculpted decoration that guidebooks to the city described at length.

With the exception of the permanent embellishments at the Capitol, publically accessible visual arts displays were extremely limited. In 1820, before Trumbull's paintings were installed in the Rotunda, a series of temporary exhibitions cycled through the Capitol. Thomas Sully exhibited *Washington Crossing the Delaware* there for two weeks at the end of February.[14] In March, John Vanderlyn exhibited a group of his paintings, including *Ariadne Asleep on the Island of Naxos* and *Marius among the Ruins of Carthage*.[15] A Mrs. Plantou followed Vanderlyn with a painting of the *Treaty of Ghent*, and then Peter P. Cardelli exhibited portrait busts of *Commodore Decatur, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, James Monroe,* and other "distinguished citizens of the United States."[16] After four months of exhibits, however, the exhibition space does not appear in the papers again.

King was the first portraitist to take up permanent residence in Washington, D.C., and his was the only picture gallery of its kind throughout the years he maintained it.[17] The only other attempts to establish permanent exhibitions in Washington were for

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[13] The Chevalier de Bacourt, *Souvenirs of a Diplomat* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1885) 63.
[14] The exhibitions were held in "the old Congress Hall, on Capitol Hill." Advertisement, *The National Intelligencer* (February 23, 1820).
[15] Advertisement, *The National Intelligencer* (March 18, 1820).
[16] Advertisement, *The National Intelligencer* (March 23, 1820); Advertisement, *The National Intelligencer* (May 9, 1820).
[17] Gilbert Stuart was resident in Washington between 1803 and 1805, and he may have limitations of a small market caused him to reconsider and return to Boston. See Chapter One.

museums of natural curiosities, and they did not include picture galleries. In 1823, proprietor James Griffiths opened the Columbian Museum, whose natural curiosities collection he compared in his first advertisement to that of the well-established Peale Museum of Philadelphia.[18] The Museum struggled; in the summer of 1825 a group of investors attempted to purchase a building for the collection, but they ultimately gave up the effort and the Museum closed. In 1836, John Varden opened the Washington Museum on similar lines. He maintained the collection for a number of years, but not without pleas to the public for increased interest: "The proprietor will take it as a favor if the subscribers will prevail on their ladies and children to visit the Museum oftener, now that the weather is fine…."[19]

King may not have planned to settle permanently in Washington, D.C. He initially visited the city to complete portrait commissions from Philadelphia publisher Joseph Delaplaine. John Quincy Adams was one of those sitters, and confided to his diary in March 1819 that when he had first spoken to King about sitting for the Delaplaine commission the artist "expected very soon to leave the City," but that some weeks later King found himself with so much work that he would be "obliged to remain here two or three Months longer."[20] Both comments imply that the artist did not intend to stay permanently. During King's sojourn, however, a financial recession gripped the country. Though all populations felt the impact of the Panic of 1819, the government continued to pay congressmen and other federal workers throughout the depression, as

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[18] "Columbian Museum," *The National Intelligencer* (October 14, 1823).

[19] "Washington Museum, corner of 4 ½ and D streets," *The National Intelligencer* (June 15, 1840). It is unclear when the Washington Museum closed; the final advertisement appeared in February 1841. "Great and Combined Attraction in the Saloon of the Washington Museum," *The National Intelligencer* (February 12, 1841).

[20] John Quincy Adams diary 31, 1 January 1819 - 20 March 1821, 10 November 1824 - 6 December 1824, page 69 [electronic edition]. *The Diaries of John Quincy Adams: A Digital Collection*. Boston, Mass.: Massachusetts Historical Society, 2004. http://www.masshist.org/jqadiaries

King may have noted.[21] For this reason, Washington proved to be an ideal patronage site, despite its small population. Though it was less intellectually and artistically stimulating than Philadelphia, New York, or Boston at the same time, the absence of other artists left King with a wide field of opportunity. King's move to Washington in 1818 also coincided with the death of his mother in Newport. King inherited $5,000 from her estate the following year, which he invested in real estate in Washington.[22] King's decision to remain in Washington combined pragmatism with timely circumstance. Having determined to settle permanently in Washington, he designed a home and studio, which he built in the early 1820s, and of which his Gallery of Paintings became the central feature.

The Gallery of Paintings opened in 1824 with a collection that featured a wide variety of paintings, both original compositions and copies. Almost all of the paintings were, and would remain, works from King's own hand, with the exception of temporary single picture exhibitions, which King advertised in rapid succession during the 1820s and early 1830s. The exhibition space covered two floors, each with a large gallery room; a large skylight lit the upstairs room. The Gallery finances have not survived, though its activities do provide clues to its success. The temporary exhibitions King mounted, which he included in the 25-cent admission fee for the entire collection, likely boosted attendance and were profitable, or he would not have continued them. The cost of maintaining the Gallery cannot have been ruinous, as it was for so many failed proprietors. The fact that King owned his building, and so did not pay rent on the space, may also have impacted the Gallery's viability. King was likely better off than many

[21] Andrew Cosentino suggests that the Panic of 1819 may have helped King to decide to remain in Washington.
[22] Cosentino, *The Paintings of Charles Bird King*, 38.

other artists of the time period and did not accumulate the majority of his wealth from painting. Instead, he focused his investments in real estate and proved himself to be a formidable businessman. By the time of his death in 1862, King had amassed a respectable estate. His cousin and executor George Gordon King estimated the value of the estate, after payment of debts and excepting King's paintings and print collection, at $38,000. This included the land and improvement values of approximately one quarter of the block on which he lived as well as a large lot nearby on H Street, all of which had brought in rental income.[23]

In Washington, King could not rely upon the collegiality that the community of established artists in other Eastern cities provided. He maintained correspondence with artists based in other cities and played host when they visited Washington, a frequent stop for portraitists interested in painting politicians.[24] Thomas Sully was his closest friend, their relationship stretching back to time they spent in London as roommates. Sully and King visited one another frequently after both were established artists, and Sully always stayed with King when he visited Washington.[25] King also offered his help to younger artists. George Healy recalled later in life a day spent with King wandering Washington

[23] King split the proceeds of the estate between legacies to individual family members and to the corporate entities in Newport of the Redwood Library and Athenaeum, and of the Newport Girls and Public Schools. These gifts were on top of the real assets of his body of work and print collection that went to the Redwood Library, Smithsonian Institution, and to family and friends.

[24] Horatio Greenough set up what he referred to as a "noble studio" in King's building when he traveled to Washington from mid-February to mid-March 1828. Nathalia Wright, *Horatio Greenough: The First American Sculptor* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1963) 51.

[25] King, for his part, stayed with Sully when he visited Philadelphia, and was such a family intimate that he stayed in the Sully home for a week in 1838 for Ellen Sully's wedding. According to Elizabeth Newman, King left Washington on November 7 and returned on November 15. Sully noted in his "Journal" that Ellen was married on the 7th, and confirms that King "left us to return home on the 15th." Sully, "Journal," (Collection New York Public Library) 189. Elizabeth Newman, "Journal," November 6 and November 15, 1838.

when he was new to the city, and King mentored both George Cooke and John Gadsby Chapman during the 1830s.[26]

Perhaps particularly because he lacked an artists' community, King quickly and fully integrated into the small but respectable society of full-time Washingtonians. Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Harrison Smith were among his most influential friends. Samuel Harrison Smith was the first owner and editor of the *National Intelligencer* newspaper. His wife, Margaret Bayard Smith, was a novelist and a pivotal force within early Washington society. The Smiths moved to Washington in 1800, coincident to their marriage and to the federal government's relocation to the city. They were connected to the administration politically, but they were also part of a small community of full-time Washington residents who played an important social role since so many Washington residents were seasonal or transitory. Margaret Bayard Smith called on her relationship with King for an important passage in her 1828 novel *What is Gentility? A Moral Tale*. Smith sends her protagonists to "Mr. K's studio" in a scene that grounds the novel's fictional families in the palpably real world of Washington, D.C. while simultaneously supporting Smith's overarching theme that happiness and gentility are both based in a sound classical education.

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[26] Marie de Mare includes a sentimental anecdote of King and Healy's time together in Washington in 1842, reporting that King took Healy through the "picturesque" part of town "with its swarm of Negroes, men, women, and children, who lazed around…happy-looking in their squalor". She does not provide a citation for Healy and King's relationship, claiming in the acknowledgments "Every incident, date and place has been carefully verified. The conversations, if not always in the exact words are nevertheless true, based on authentic direct reports such as the artist's own letters and other contemporary diaries and letters combined with my personal recollections of him…." In her journal, Elizabeth Newman recorded that King and Healy frequently visited her together between May and July of 1842. Marie de Mare, *G. P. A Healy American Artist: An Intimate Chronicle of the Nineteenth Century* (New York: David McKay Company, Inc.) 108. Healy wrote in his *Autobiography* that when he visited Washington in 1842, he was given space at the White House to copy Stuart's *George Washington.* GPA Healy, *Reminiscences of a Portrait Painter* (Chicago: A. C. McClurg and Co., 1894) 121-122.

Dr. and Mrs. William Thornton were another pair of well-connected friends. Dr. Thornton was a physician and architect, responsible for the original design for the United States Capitol as well as for significant private residences in and around Washington.[27] In the late 1820s King borrowed a medallion-style portrait of Thomas Jefferson that Thornton, also an amateur painter, had copied from Gilbert Stuart, in order to produce his own copy. After William Thornton's death in 1828, King remained friendly with his wife, Ana Maria Brodeau Thornton and was a frequent visitor at her home.

Much of what we know of King's life in Washington comes from a journal kept from 1838 through 1845 by King's cousin, Elizabeth Newman. Newman documented the artist's close relationships with the Smiths and with Mrs. Thornton as well as his active participation in Washington's cultural life. King was on intimate terms with the Newman family, frequently a daily visitor. According to Newman's journal, for instance, King often accompanied her to visit Mrs. Thornton. While she did not record his every movement, Newman would on the frequent occasions of King's evening visits note his destination after leaving her home. In 1838 alone, King attended the theater and opera at least eighteen times. King's tastes were wide-ranging; he attended whatever performances were offered in the relatively small Washington market, often an eclectic mix of drama, comedy, and spectacle. Theaters during the time period typically staged serious drama as well as a lighter diversion on the same bill. One evening King saw a performance of Bellini's *La Sonnambula* followed by "Love in Humble Life." King enjoyed more sensational spectacles as well. On another occasion he was present for the spectacle of "The Lilliputians in Kentucky" featuring Mr. Porter, "the Kentucky Giant, 7

[27] Thornton designed The Tayloe House (also known as the Octagon House), Woodlawn (for George Washington's adopted granddaughter Nelly Custis and her husband Major Lawrence Lewis), and Tudor Place (for Thomas Peter and Martha Parke Custis, another of Martha Washington's granddaughters). Gordon Brown, *Incidental Architect: William Thornton and the Cultural Life of Early Washington, D.C., 1794-1828* (Athens: Published for the U.S. Capitol Historical Society by Ohio University Press, c. 2009).

feet 9 inches high! Major Stevens, the celebrated and most perfect formed Dwarf, 40 inches high!, etc…" followed by the tragedy of Tom Thumb (April 17, 1838). He also saw the prodigy performance of eleven-year-old Miss Davenport in the title role of Richard III (December 3, 1838).[28] When he was not at the theater King frequented private parties as well as a Bachelor's Ball (March 22, 1838) and Carusi's May Ball (May 1, 1838).[29] King's social life had been equally active in the 1820s, according to Dunlap's memory of his 1824 visit, during which he noted that King spent his evenings

> attending the soirees, parties and balls of the ambassadors, secretaries of the cabinet, president…and [was] justly esteemed everywhere.[30]

Though King enjoyed the company of others, he remained a bachelor throughout his life. Elizabeth Newman's journal suggests that King enjoyed the company of female family members; he spent many evenings at the Newmans' home and in the company of his female relatives. He was a frequent companion to his cousin and to the younger ladies of the family to parties as well as once in 1845 to "dancing school."[31]

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[28] Miss Davenport was the eleven-year-old Jean Margaret Davenport, who appeared across the East Coast in 1838 in the title role of *Richard III*, as well as in "The Manager's Daughter," a work written for her by Edward Lancaster. The *National Intelligencer* advertised that she would perform in both works on December 3, 1838, the opening night of the season for the National Theater. William W. Clapp, Jr., *A Record of the Boston Stage* (Boston and Cambridge: James Munroe and Company, 1853) 401-402. King also attended *The Barber of Seville* (May 15, 1838) and Shakespeare's *As You Like It* (June 23, 1838). "National Theatre-Washington. First Night of the Grand Opera," *National Intelligencer* (December 24, 1838) page 3; advertisement, *National Intelligencer* (April 17, 1838) page 3; advertisement, *National Intelligencer* (December 3, 1838) page 3.

[29] Elizabeth Newman recorded sixteen occasions in 1838 when King called at her house on his way to a party.

[30] William Dunlap, *History of the Rise and Progress of the Arts of Design in the United States* (New York: Benjamin Blom, 1965) [1834] III, 29.

[31] Late in life King's bachelorhood may have become more eccentric. In an extensive description of a visit to the artist just before his death in 1862 that is accurate in many of its facts, a correspondent to the *Boston Evening Transcript* describes "Mrs. King's room" as a place where he imagined a wife, "and her room has been arranged by him, with much consideration for her comfort and her accomplishments." Among other things, King displayed a woman's hat, shawl, and gloves, along with an embroidery frame with a needle sticking through the fabric and a guitar leaning against a wall. "King, the Painter," *Boston Evening Transcript* (March 27, 1862). On March 20, 1840 Elizabeth Newman recorded that "the ladies put [Mr. King's] Boudoir in order." Could this be the same space? It was perhaps an area for King's female subjects to prepare for their sittings, which he embellished over time with domestic objects.

THE LATER YEARS OF THE GALLERY

After the Gallery of Paintings opened to acclaim in 1824, King continued to add original compositions and copies to the collection and mounted a succession of single picture exhibitions. However, these slowed during the mid-1830s. Between early 1835 and 1840, King only advertised two special exhibitions: George Cooke's full-scale copy of Gericault's *Wreck of the Medusa*, in 1835, and Thomas Sully's portrait of *Queen Victoria*, in 1840.[32] Even earlier, when King was actively promoting the Gallery and staging revenue-sharing single-picture exhibitions, writers employed it as an example of the apathy many Americans had for the visual arts. Travel writer Anne Royall complained in 1828 that no one in Washington mentioned Charles Bird King or his Gallery of Paintings to her during her time in the city, despite knowing that she wrote travelogues:

> Mr. King – so little is genius valued … in Washington, that it was a mere accident I discovered this celebrated artist. Passing near his house, one day, and struck by its singular size and appearance, I inquired who lived there? When I was told it was the artist King, one of the first portrait painters in the United States. On my visit to Washington, when writing my Sketches, though I was six months in the city, and inquired from time to time of the citizens, respecting the objects worthy of notice, this gentleman, an honor to the place, was never mentioned. As to the subject of a limner, I am by no means qualified to judge, but I should say, he was the best I have seen; nor would I wish for a greater treat, than to visit his gallery of paintings, and yet so little is he known.[33]

A statement signed by "A Friend of the Arts" voiced a similar sentiment in the National Intelligencer in 1836: "I am not a little surprised, considering the meritorious exhibition of paintings that this Gallery affords, it should not be more resorted to."[34] Complaints of

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[32] King advertised both exhibitions in the *National Intelligencer*. For Cooke's *Wreck of the Medusa*, see *National Intelligencer* (January 30, 1835). For Sully's *Queen Victoria*, see *National Intelligencer* (July 6, 1840).

[33] Mrs. Anne Royall, *The Black Book; or, A Continuation of Travels, in the United States* (Washington City, D.C.: Printed for the Author, 1828) 112-113.

[34] A Friend of the Arts, "C. B. King's Gallery of Paintings," *National Intelligencer* (August 8, 1836).

this sort proliferated in newspapers across the United States during the Early Republic and Jacksonian periods.[35] That they appeared in connection with King's Gallery shows that he, like other proprietors of for-profit galleries and museums, found it difficult to attract an audience.

King's 1840 display of Thomas Sully's *Queen Victoria* was the last single-picture exhibition at the Gallery of Paintings. When the exhibit closed, the Gallery disappeared from the pages of the *National Intelligencer* until March 11, 1844, when King for the first time advertised the Gallery for its own holdings and not for a special exhibition. On the same day, the *National Intelligencer* published a puff on the Gallery that expressed support for the entertainment and leisure a visit afforded:

> Seeing an advertisement communicating the information that Mr. King's Gallery of Paintings is yet open to visitors, we are induced to remind our readers more directly of this fact, and to assure strangers and residents who have not visited his rooms that there is nothing in Washington, in-doors, more worthy of being visited, or which, in the way of recreation, will better reward an hour's attention.[36]

King's ad ran for over six months, until late September 1844. In January 1845 King placed a new ad, this time announcing "C. B. King's Gallery of Paintings will be permanently closed after the 4th of March." King simultaneously solicited a tenant for the entire building, both the public and the private spaces, noting that the paintings would be "removed elsewhere" when the Gallery closed.[37] Despite this apparent intention, there is no evidence that King ever removed the collection. King himself did leave Washington

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[35] In his seminal book, *The Artist in American Society*, Neil Harris did not consider picture galleries to be significant enough in number or influence to merit even a passing mention, except as regards the profitability of non-commissioned artwork: "Artists…were forced either to take a severe financial loss or else arrange for national tours. When great religious or historical paintings were created specifically for exhibitions, the trips took on all the aspects of a carnival." Neil Harris, *The Artist in American Society: The Formative Years 1790-1860* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966) 83.

[36] "King's Gallery of Paintings," *National Intelligencer* (March 11, 1844).

[37] The full ad ran under the headline "Exhibition of Paintings," *National Intelligencer* (January 15, 1845).

in 1845, but only for a three-month period.[38] He resumed his regular social calls after his return in October 1845.

Other organizations made use of at least a portion of King's building in the second half of the 1840s, though it is unclear whether they superseded the Gallery or were integrated with it. The United States and Foreign Agency at Washington, D.C. began advertising their offices at the location "known as King's Gallery" in April 1845. The firm failed by the end of the year. In 1846, several groups advertised that they would hold meetings at "King's Gallery." One of these was the Irving Society, which also announced a meeting at "King's Gallery of the Fine Arts" in 1848. Businesses associated with the building were not the only ones to mention the Gallery of Paintings. *National Intelligencer* advertisers referred to nearby locations in terms of their proximity to the Gallery even after King's death in 1862.

While it is unclear exactly when King reopened the Gallery, or under what conditions, guidebooks, maps, and the occasional correspondent referred to it well into the 1850s. None of the many advertisements describe King's Gallery as a meeting site or as a reference point for other neighborhood businesses provide confirmation of when King reopened it. He may have done so upon his return in 1845 since the paintings were still there and it was to their benefit for the rooms to be open and aired out. Though the timing of the reopening is open to question, guidebooks and maps would not have continued to list the Gallery as a point of interest had it not remained accessible to the public. The last guidebook to mention King's Gallery was the *Picture of Washington and*

[38] That King's cousin Elizabeth Newman looked after his home and Gallery during his absence suggests that King left the building and its contents intact during his absence. Newman noted several times in her journal that she gave keys to a caretaker to air out the building, and that she aired out the Gallery specifically five days before King's return.

its Vicinity for 1848, which its author William Q. Force reprinted in 1850.[39] The United States Senate included King's Gallery on its official map of Washington in 1852.[40] Several years later, the Washington newspaper the *Daily American Organ* wrote:

> Mr. King, that Nestor of metropolitan art, still keeps his "gallery" open at the villa on Twelfth street. It is packed with his own productions – portraits, landscapes, still life, and "many other things, too numerous to mention." Mr. King, for many years, was the only artist here, and has painted many celebrated characters, including some of painted Indians, who have come to have a talk with their "great father."[41]

Finally, descriptions of King's home and Gallery from the end of his life, as well as his nephew George Gordon King's inventory of the Estate from 1862, show that many paintings still hung on the walls at that time.

KING'S LEGACY

The Gallery's successful first fifteen years corresponded with the end of the most productive period in Charles Bird King's career. By the 1840s, when the Gallery appears

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[39] William Q. Force published editions of *Picture of Washington and its Vicinity:* 1845, 1848, 1850. The 1845 and 1848 editions differ markedly from one another, while the 1850 edition is a reprint of the 1848 edition. For the purposes of this discussion, the 1848 edition is the most significant of the three, because it demonstrates that King's Gallery was open at that time. The 1845 edition dates to the year King intended to close the Gallery, and possibly the book had gone to press before King announced he closure. William Q. Force, *Picture of Washington and its Vicinity for 1848, with Thirty-Eight Engravings: Also, The Washington Guide, Containing a Congressional Directory, and Much Other Useful Information* (Washington: William Q. Force, 1848). The 1845 guide contained a paragraph about the Gallery, which Force described as King's "Exhibition Rooms," and described it as containing about 300 paintings. The 1848 edition refers to the establishment as "Mr. Charles King's Gallery of Paintings" and says that the Gallery contained more than 260 paintings "in two apartments." The latest map to include King's Gallery is a City of Washington Map, 1856, Charles DeSilver Co. Publisher, plate 16. The map is in the collection of The Museum of the City of Washington and while interesting for its inclusion of King's Gallery as a Point of Interest, it does not place it in the correct location.

[40] Andrew J. Cosentino and Henry H. Glassie, *The Capital Image: Painters in Washington, 1800-1915* (Washington, D. C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1983) 39.

[41] These comments appeared in a column in the *Daily American Organ*. Unfortunately, the citation information for the article has been lost. Col. Merle Moore of the Smithsonian American Art Museum photocopied the article, which had been clipped, from John Mix Stanley's scrapbook, in the collection of the Oakland Art Museum, California. The *Daily American Organ* was a newspaper published in Washington, D.C. by the Know-Nothing Party between 1854 and 1856. The comments appeared in a column titled "City Intelligence" and with a sub-heading of "Artists in Washington."

to have struggled to attract visitors, King simultaneously suffered from an affliction to his eyes. He was unable to work for nearly a month in 1843, and his eyes were so enflamed in 1844 that he was leached, leaving him "too weak for work." His output declined from the 1840s onward, perhaps in part as a result of this trouble with his eyesight.[42]

King's reputation began its descent during the 1830s, before his trouble with his eyes began and while his Gallery and commissions for portraits continued strong, with the publication of the first work of art history to concern the United States. William Dunlap's *History of the Rise and Progress of the Arts of Design in the United States* included biographies of all major, and many minor, artists active in the colonies and later the United States up to 1834. Dunlap was understandably peevish that King, who was both a friend and a colleague, would not supply a biography and indicated as much in his entry on the artist. Dunlap culminated King's three-page biography in only faint praise:

> I presume that it is his industry in painting that has served him instead of genius, in which nature has stinted him. It appears that all he has acquired has been by very hard study; and Mr. King is an example of a man of very moderate genius who has acquired much in his profession, and commanded that employment which has made him independent in his circumstances, and an object of attention in society.[43]

Dunlap could have constructed some elements of the biography without aid; he knew something about King's time in London, and of his single-picture exhibitions; since King had mounted several exhibitions of Dunlap's work, they were also in frequent communication with one another during the 1820s.[44] King was, as Dunlap noted,

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[42] Elizabeth Newman's journal ends at the end of 1845, so there is no record of any later trouble King experienced with his eyesight. She commented beginning on May 25, 1843 that King was having trouble with his eyes, and her comments continued sporadically through June 19 of that year. In 1844, she only commented on the subject three times, April 14-16, but it was on the last of those days that she noted that his eyes were too weak to paint.

[43] Dunlap, *History*, III, 28-29.

[44] King displayed three paintings by Dunlap: *Bearing of the Cross* (exhibited 1825), *Crucifixion of Christ* (exhibited 1829), and *Venus Attired by the Graces*, after Guido (exhibited 1829). Dunlap was an early

industrious. According to contemporary accounts, by the 1840s the Gallery of Paintings contained over 300 paintings, almost all from King's hand. He also painted hundreds of commissioned portraits of prominent white Americans and over 140 portraits for the War Department of American Indians who visited Washington.[45]

Dunlap's comment about King's industry, however, did not celebrate the artist's popularity as a portraitist or as the proprietor of a successful picture gallery (where Dunlap had shown his own work). Instead, it provided a foil to the negative assessment that King had been stinted in natural genius, leaving him nothing to fall back on but industry. The next serious historian of American Art, Henry Tuckerman, in 1867 repeated the essence of Dunlap's criticism:

> During a period of forty years his studio at the Capital was filled with the portraits of the political and other celebrities of the day, - not remarkable for artistic superiority, but often curious and valuable as likenesses, especially the Indian portraits. His industry and simple habits enabled him to acquire a handsome competence, and his amiable and exemplary character won him many friends.[46]

King, according to Dunlap and to Tuckerman (and therefore to the generations who followed them), was industrious, frugal, and a pleasant companion.

King's choice of the Redwood Library and Athenaeum as the repository for the majority of the paintings he hung in his Gallery of Paintings further weakened his posthumous reputation for they did not prove to be the steward of his collection for which he had hoped. At the time of King's death, two of his cousins were on the Board of Trustees, and his family had been closely tied to the Redwood Library through much of the nineteenth century. However, by the 1880s King's family was no longer as involved

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visitor to King's Gallery, writing in his biographical entry on King that he visited him in 1824 and found him "full of business and a great favorite,...." Ibid., III, 9.

[45] I use the terms "white American" and "American Indian" consciously. The terms "white" and "Indian" are accurate to the time period. Both groups referred to themselves and to their counterparts in these terms, which were descriptive rather than racially loaded. See Chapter Two for more detailed analysis.

[46] Henry T. Tuckerman, *Book of the Artists* (New York: G. P. Putnam & Son, 1867) 68.

in the administration, and the Redwood Library could not accommodate King's gift on their walls. At the time King made the gift, the building consisted of a large reading room, with a smaller hall appended. Though the rooms were sizeable, measuring 23 x 50 and 22,5 x 35,10 feet, the institution's primary function was and remains to be a lending library, and that requires devoting the majority of the building's space to the display and shelving of books, and not to the display of paintings.[47] As a result, many of the paintings King gave to the Redwood Library could not be displayed.[48] Probably in order to free up storage space taken up by the paintings not on display, they deaccessioned all but the portraits of white Americans over the course of the next century, sadly without the same meticulous attention to detail with which they had recorded the accession of the collection.[49] The portraits of American Indians were the last to leave, in 1970. By this time, King's portraits of American Indians were his best-known works, and today those who have heard of Charles Bird King are unlikely to think of him as a versatile painter who trained at the Royal Academy and with Benjamin West in London. He appears more frequently in studies of painters of American Indians with artists such as George Catlin and Carl Bodmer.

Virtually no one knows King today as the proprietor of the earliest and only antebellum Gallery of Paintings in Washington. However, the Gallery provided King the opportunity to participate in the construction of the nineteenth-century American visual experience in a much more meaningful way than if he had painted only commissions and

[47] Modern measurements: Reading Room (23 x 50'), Harrison Room (22,5 x 35,10 feet). Thanks to Lisa Long for being my eyes and feet on the ground at the Redwood!

[48] In 1862, soon after selecting seventy-five paintings from King's estate for the Redwood collection, a "committee was authorized to place such of the pictures as there was no room for in the Library, at the boys' and girls' High Schools, to be returned when called for." George C. Mason, *Annals of the Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, R.I.* (Newport, R.I.: Redwood Library, 1891) 238.

[49] From time to time paintings by King appear on the market and a few have found their way into museum collections, but the majority of the copies and subject paintings King gave to the Redwood remain unlocated.

compositions for the various annual exhibitions held in New York, Philadelphia, and Boston. King's display reinforced his British-influenced European training through his original compositions, the types of paintings he chose to copy, and the large-scale history paintings he exhibited in the 1820s and 1830s. In a city where it was the only permanent exhibition of the visual arts, the Gallery of Paintings drew a local and through tourism a national audience and was a landmark for decades.

STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY

When I first became acquainted with the work of Charles Bird King, I was not immediately certain how to classify him. He had produced outstanding works of art in a variety of categories – trompe l'oeil, genre, still life, and portraiture – and yet was little known. Indeed, if you ask Americanists today if they have heard of King, most have no more than a general picture of a nineteenth-century portraitist. Those who study trompe l'oeil or genre painting are familiar with individual works by King. And those who study portraiture frequently know that he painted a full-length portrait of Louisa Adams now in the collection of the Smithsonian American Art Museum. It is the rare scholar indeed who knows that King did all of these things.

My dissertation initially was to be a case study approach of some of the remarkable works King produced in these different categories. The finished work does follow that approach loosely. However, more significant than any individual painting, as I conducted research into King's career I realized that his Gallery of Paintings was his greatest contribution to nineteenth-century American art and culture. Most, though not all, of the paintings for which King is known today hung at one time in his Gallery. But they joined over 200 other paintings, some lost and others not, that together formed an introduction to European styles and subjects that prepared King's American audience to

understand his original compositions and by extension to contemplate the possibility of an American art.

My goals have been three-fold: to document King's Gallery of Paintings, to support a countervailing trend to nationalist exceptionalism in American art, and to reorient our understanding of several of King's most important works of art. I have brought to life and brought forward to scholarship the Gallery of Paintings that King presented to the pubic from the mid-1820s through the end of the antebellum era. In the process, I have provided context for the types of public exhibitions available to Americans during this time period. In a field so thoroughly dominated by the Peale family – primarily by Charles Willson Peale's Philadelphia Museum, but by his sons' exhibition efforts as well – I have identified an alternate type of display, one that never incorporated natural curiosities.

The composition of the Gallery of Paintings collection was responsible for its popularity and, by extension, for its longevity. This is an unusual argument for two reasons. First, American art history has primarily followed a trajectory that emphasizes American exceptionalism. From the time of William Dunlap's penning of his *History* in 1834, to the first flowering of American art historical scholarship during the Progressive Era of the early twentieth century, art historians have privileged narrative lines that celebrate the Americanness in American Art. We as a field have looked back to Thomas Cole's entrance on the stage and focused on poet William Cullen Bryant's 1829 appeal to the artist that when he visit Europe, he look at the landscape but that he not forget the American scene: "Gaze on them, till the tears shall dim thy sight,/ But keep that earlier, wilder image bright." We have focused on this far more than on the Old Masters, primarily Claude Lorraine and Salvator Rosa, on whom Cole based his own work.

The other reason my argument has not been made is that it necessarily privileges the many copies of European Masters' paintings that King displayed in his Gallery. Copies played an important role in the first half of the nineteenth century, and as I show, even into the 1860s the public and critics alike considered them to be significant works of art in their own rights as well as educational tools. In a recently published dissertation, Dorothy Moss writes about the status of the copy c. 1900.[50] The 1860s saw the introduction of the carbon print into American visual culture. This technology made it possible through photography to capture minute details in paint handling and nuances of light and shade previously impossible to achieve through photography. The Corcoran; Metropolitan Museum of Art; and Museum of Fine Arts, Boston all displayed framed carbon prints beginning in the 1870s. When the Fogg opened at Harvard in 1895, several hundred Braun carbon photographs were on display on the second floor, and the majority of the Fogg's budget for acquisitions went toward the purchase of carbons. Very quickly then, the painted copy fell out of favor. Only recently, in particular in relation to nineteenth-century French academic copies, have scholars begun to return their attention to the positive roles copies played in earlier eras.

This study is divided into four chapters. In the first, I explore late-colonial and early-republic public displays of the visual arts. Though individual exhibits differed from one another, inventories of collections and newspaper advertisements repeat themes that announce similarities in focus across the many different types of collections available to the American public. My analysis demonstrates that King's Gallery was in step with a tradition of viewing that stretched back to John Smibert's Boston studio in the mid-eighteenth century and created a visual continuity into the mid-nineteenth century. Like

[50] Dorothy Moss, "Translations, Appropriations, and Copies of Paintings at the Dawn of Mass Culture in the United States, ca. 1900," Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Delaware, 2012.

King, the majority of the proprietors of visual displays from Smibert forward were themselves practicing artists. This chapter ends with analysis of the contents of King's Gallery and with support for the argument that even King's most casual visitors would have been familiar with the styles and subject matter of European masters, and that King's own display must be considered within a wide trajectory of European-inspired imagery that in turn commented on American culture.

In a second chapter, focused on portraiture, I examine what it meant to King and to his visitors to be "American." The group of men and women King displayed in his Gallery was far more diverse than typical for the time period. King included many prominent politicians, but no American President after John Quincy Adams (whom King had painted before Adams' election). Instead he featured portraits of many men of commerce as well as prominent women and numerous American Indians. I argue that King's works may be read profitably through the lens of physiognomy, an approach that highlighted King's belief in eighteenth-century Enlightenment ideals at a time when scientists in particular were moving towards cultural determinism, and supported their arguments visually through a competing manner of assessing character through physical traits called phrenology. King's physiognomic investment particularly shaped his approach to the more than 140 American Indians he painted for the War Department or for his own display, but nowhere is it more evident than in his composite portrait *Young Omahaw, War Eagle, Little Missouri, and Pawnees*. Through this painting, King forged a place in United States culture for the American Indian that challenged attitudes of cultural inferiority and the increasing tide of support for Indian removal.

In the third chapter, I look at a group of King's original compositions, genre paintings. King's style in this category was clearly indebted to seventeenth-century Dutch tradition as filtered through an eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century British

lens, in particular the works of Sir David Wilkie. I consider three genre paintings in depth: *Itinerant Artist, Rip van Winkle Returning from a Morning's Lounge,* and *Interior of a Ropewalk.* The first two paintings date approximately to the opening of the Gallery in 1824 and appear to have been pendants based on their size and on a guidebook's later reference to them as nos. 56 and 58 in the collection. Both paintings create diorama-like interiors in which families interact. *Itinerant Artist* presents order and respectability in contrast with *Rip Van Winkle's* chaos and squalor. *Itinerant Artist* celebrates the potential of the American farmer who, even as he takes time from his agrarian duties to hunt, leaves his family financially in a position to engage the services of a traveling artist. Rip's family, in contrast, bears the humiliation and deprivation occasioned by his unwillingness to engage in the burgeoning market economy. King's morality tale, told between the two paintings in familiar Dutch emblematic terms, embraces democracy and places the fine arts within its bounds.

My final chapter continues the exploration of Dutch influences over King's work, in particular through trompe l'oeil paintings hung in the Gallery: *Poor Artist's Closet, Joseph (and Mrs. Potiphar),* and *Landscape with Catalogue*. These paintings draw together the themes of King's sense of humor, his attitudes towards patronage and his methods of circumventing inadequate patronage through the establishment of the Gallery. Finally, they prompt us to reconsider the importance of European precedents in our understanding of how artists and viewers worked together to establish an American visual cultural dialogue.

Chapter One – Paintings and other Curiosities: The Art of Staging Public Exhibitions in Colonial and Early Republic America

Charles Bird King's Gallery of Paintings, opened in 1824, had no parallel in Washington, D.C or anywhere in the United States. The American public had seen a variety of types of collections of paintings and natural curiosities, beginning in the late colonial period, but King was the first successfully to mount and sustain a business devoted exclusively to the exhibition of the visual arts. The scale of the display grew over time. According to fellow painter and friend Thomas Sully, King's Gallery occupied the first floor of his home when it opened, but by the 1840s it had expanded to the second story as well. King himself produced the vast majority of the paintings on display – portraits, still lifes, trompe l'oeils, landscapes, and genre scenes, as well as numerous copies of works after European masters.

A number of sources – fellow artists, a patron, and the press – recorded early impressions of King's Gallery of Paintings. The Gallery was open by November of 1824, when the *National Intelligencer* editorialized on the benefits it would provide the still small city of Washington:

> Having this opportunity to speak of Painters, we take pleasure in introducing to more distant readers the name of an artist who is resident among us, to whom, his talent aside, our city is indebted for an embellishment which is much and justly admired. We speak of Mr. C. B. KING, and his Gallery of Paintings, prepared at much cost and labor, and arranged with a neatness and effect to which we have seen no equal any where but in the Gallery at Peale's Museum at Baltimore. The price of admission is nominal merely, and the Exhibition is really a treat. There are, besides the numerous paintings from the fertile pencil of the proprietor, many fine paintings of European masters. But, if there were nothing in it but the Portraits by Mr. KING, this collection, to which his unwearied industry is making almost daily additions, would be abundantly attractive. We recollect, in the series, among other capital likenesses of living men, those of Mr. WEBSTER, Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. ADAMS, Mr. CALHOUN, Mr. WIRT, Mr. MCLEAN,

> COMM. RODGERS, Mr. MCDUFFIE, &c. all which, as indeed we may say of all his portraits, - we know scarcely an exception – are admirable resemblances of the originals. We will say no more just now of Mr. KING'S Gallery, thus brought to our mind, than that, as residents of Washington, we feel a sense of indebtedness to him for having, at his proper charge, erected this temple of the arts, forming a charming lounge for the stranger whom business or leisure detains among us, and a refreshing amusement to those who, like us, once or twice in a year steal a fragment of an hour to visit it. Of the portraits of Mr. KING, many adorn our dwellings; and excellent as they are, in general, there is yet evidence of improvement in the works of his pencil from year to year, the last being always the best.[1]

From this article, we learn a great deal about the Gallery and about the position at least one visitor believed it could occupy within the Washington, D.C. cultural scene. The language is redolent of the flowery praise so common to the time period, but the adjectives are illuminating. In calling King's Gallery a "charming lounge" and a "refreshing amusement," the author accentuated its role as an appropriate destination for polite society. At the same time, the city's "indebtedness" stretched beyond recreation. King built a "temple of the arts" for the city, a place in which to become familiar with European styles and traditions.

In his description of the Gallery, the *National Intelligencer* writer focused on King's portraits, the only paintings for which he listed titles. However, he also noted more generally that King displayed "numerous paintings" of his own conception as well as works by European masters. These actually were King's copies after those masters' works. The reference to King's original compositions is so oblique that the reader unfamiliar with the collection would have assumed them all to have been portraits. Other contemporary visitors, however, clarify that King displayed much more than portraits and old master copies. Charles Francis Adams made the earliest-known reference to the

[1] "Native Talent," *National Intelligencer* (November 29, 1824).

collection in a January 1824 journal entry. Adams referred to visiting "Mr. King's painting rooms," where aside from portraits he saw

> some very sweet fruit pieces…. Some voluptuous pieces also which it would not do to notice before ladies. One in particular which appeared to be Joseph and the wife of Potiphar although we could not see for a veil which John and myself attempted to raise, when we discovered the deception. It was very accurate.[2]

Adams likely was referring to a lost trompe l'oeil that King displayed in the Gallery called *Joseph (and Mrs. Potiphar)*. Later in the same year, Robert Mills singled out this painting for mention as well.[3] Charles Willson Peale also visited King before the Gallery opened, in June 1824. Peale recounted in his *Autobiography* that he was impressed by the variety of painting genres on display, likely just as King was mounting the exhibition. Peale's interest was professional, but he was himself looking for "a charming lounge." Finding himself with time on his hands while visiting Washington, he like Adams recorded visiting "Mr. Kings painting room" and noted the wide variety of types of paintings on display, including "a great many portraits but also Landscapes, pieces of Still life and some imblematical [*sic*] subjects."[4] Peale and Adams' references to King's "painting room(s)" provide insights into the paintings on display at the time the Gallery opened, but they also help to construct a timeline for the opening. Had the Gallery already opened to the public, Peale and Adams undoubtedly would have made reference to King's Gallery of Paintings, as did the *National Intelligencer* in November. Adams himself referred to the Gallery by this name in a later journal entry, in 1828.[5]

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[2] Charles Francis Adams, *Diary of Charles Francis Adams* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1964-1986) I, 47-48.

[3] Robert Mills to Eliza Smith Mills, September 25, 1824, South Carolina Historical Society; quoted in *The Papers of Robert Mills, 1781-1855*, edited by Pamela Scott (Wilmington, Del., 1990) microfilm, Reel 5, document 1/1003.

[4] Charles Willson Peale, *The Autobiography of Charles Willson Peale*, Lillian B. Miller and Sidney Hart, eds. In *The Selected Papers of Charles Willson Peale and His Family* (New Haven: Yale University Press for the National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, 1983-) Vol. V, 461.

[5] Adams, *Diary of Charles Francis Adams*, II: 299.

Soon after the *National Intelligencer* article appeared King's closest friend, Thomas Sully, came to stay with the artist in Washington. Always meticulous with his own business matters, Sully was also interested in King's home/studio/Gallery space:

> Kings Building cost about $5000. Exhibition room 39 x 28 feet, skylight of which is 22 by 11 feet – 4 panes of glass each one foot – wall 16 feet – Painting room 28 by 19 ½, a second 20 by 19 ½. Basement story has 5 rooms.[6]

Based on Sully's description, the building had an upstairs exhibition room large enough to accommodate the largest history paintings and well lit by an expansive skylight; in 1835 King exhibited George Cooke's to-scale copy of the *Wreck of the Medusa* (16 by 23 ½ feet) in this space.[7] Downstairs, side-by-side painting rooms followed the footprint of the upstairs exhibition room. King used one of these as a studio. Sully's evidence shows that by separating the first floor into two large rooms, King designed the building with the expectation that the Gallery would grow in scale.

As the collection grew, King indeed expanded the Gallery to include the second downstairs painting room. By the time George Watterston described King's collection in *A New Guide to Washington* in 1842, it consisted of about 260 paintings, displayed over two floors. The primary exhibition space remained upstairs. Watterston's is the most complete known accounting of the contents of King's Gallery and appears here in its entirety:

> KING'S GALLERY.
>
> This neat and beautiful gallery is situated on Twelfth street west, near F street. The edifice is of wood, twenty-seven feet front by thirty-eight feet deep, with a room in the rear, and a neat portico in front. The lower room contains about one

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[6] Thomas Sully, "Journal" (Collection New York Public Library) December 19, 1824; typescript p. 33. All subsequent comments from Sully come from this journal and may be retrieved by consulting the typescript on the dates referenced.

[7] "Exhibition at King's, Gallery, *Wreck of the Medusa*, by G. Cooke," *National Intelligencer* (January 30, 1835).

> hundred fine paintings, consisting of portraits, landscapes, fancy pieces, &c. Among these the most beautiful, are the following: Nos. 2 and 3, Landscapes; Nos. 22 and 27, beautiful portraits of the Misses S----; No. 18, the Environs of Milan; No. 19, an admirable and spirited head of a Drunkard; No. 30, "I am not mad," very fine; No. 56, the Itinerant Artist; No. 58, Rip Van Winkle's reception by his wife after his morning lounge, &c.
>
> In the gallery or upper room there are about one hundred and sixty paintings, consisting, as in the lower room, of the portraits of distinguished men and others, most admirably executed, and unsurpassed as likenesses. Those of Mr. Southard, Woodbury, Crawford, Rush, R. Lawrence, Mrs. S. H. Smith, &c., are inimitable. The landscapes, fruit pieces, views, &c., are executed with great skill and fidelity. Most of the pieces in both of these rooms, as well as in the passage leading up to the gallery, are from the pencil of our estimable fellow-citizen Mr. Charles King, who seems devoted to his fascinating and beautiful art. The rooms are handsomely finished, affording to the amateur and admirer of the arts one of the most agreeable lounges in Washington. It is the only collection in this city, and though not very extensive, is equal, if not superior to any in this country in beauty of coloring and skillfulness of execution.[8]

King's portrait of *William Crawford* **(Figure 65)** is the only painting that appears in both Watterston's and one of the 1824 reports. Where the sources concur is in their recognition that King mixed portraits with other genres, even if the authors use different terminology: landscapes, fruit pieces, fancy pieces (Watterston); emblematical paintings, still lifes (Peale); deceptions (Adams); and paintings of European masters (*National Intelligencer*).

The building that King constructed to house his home, studio, and collection provides concrete evidence that King considered the Gallery to be central to his career as an artist. Had the Gallery not proven successful, King would have been left with a large, empty building ill-suited to other pursuits. It is unclear at what stage in his career King formulated the desire to open a gallery, but his training certainly prepared him to do so. Beginning with his apprenticeship with Edward Savage, King worked with someone who

[8] George Watterston, *A New Guide to Washington* (Washington: Robert Farnham; New York: Samuel Colman, 1842) 102-103.

had himself studied in London and who subsequently opened a picture gallery. King then traveled to London where he studied European painting directly and came under the influence of the Anglo appreciation of seventeenth-century Dutch masterworks, in particular as filtered through Sir David Wilkie, whose career developed while King was in London.[9] At the same time, he was witness to the nuanced London art market, where exhibition strategies were far more sophisticated than in the United States at the time. And it was while he was in London that King produced at least two copies that remained in the Gallery collection until its last days in 1861: *Lord Crewe, in the Costume of Henry VIII* after Sir Joshua Reynolds and *Telemachus on the Island of Calypso* after Benjamin West **(Figures 28 & 26)**.[10]

If not as early as his student days, King certainly put time and effort into planning the Gallery in the years prior to 1824. Peale and the *National Intelligencer* both referred to King's industry.[11] Though art historians later would damn King with faint praise for this quality, baldly stating that his work ethic rather than talent was the source of his success, the popularity and longevity of the Gallery provide a counterpoint that not only vindicates his capabilities as an artist but the productivity that allowed him to mount a substantial exhibition notable for its breadth of subjects and in the case of the copies, of styles.

PUBLIC ART VENUES IN THE COLONIAL AND EARLY REPUBLIC PERIODS

The majority of public exhibition spaces that preceded and many that were contemporaneous to King's were museums, not galleries, in the sense that the terms were

[9] For analysis of King's interest in Wilkie, see Chapter Three.
[10] King exhibited both copies at the 1813 Pennsylvania Academy and Columbian Society of Artists Annual Exhibition. "Review of the Third Annual Exhibition of the Columbian Society of Artists and Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts," *The Port Folio* II, 2 (August, 1813) 130, 126 [whole article 122-141].
[11] For more on King's character, refer to the Introduction.

used at that time. Museums descended from the tradition of cabinets of curiosities, and encompassed a wide variety of objects, from paintings, prints, and sculptures to rocks, preserved insects and animals, coins, and other collectibles.[12] The label "museum" was not applied to American visual arts collections until after the Civil War with the introduction of large, municipally-funded public institutions. The term reflected the encyclopedic nature of the collections these institutions formed, just as it had defined the display of natural curiosities earlier in the century. The semantic distinction – museum versus gallery – reflects the ways proprietors and public alike approached different types of collections in the first half of the nineteenth century. A picture gallery was a rarefied space – a visitor knew that he or she would find on view paintings, prints, and perhaps a few sculptures (or more likely, in the United States, plaster casts). Advertisements for museums, in contrast, emphasized the diversity of amusements visitors would encounter. The proprietors of the "National Museum and Gallery of Fine Arts" in Washington, D.C., advertised in 1830 that they had

> fitted up, in a neat and appropriate manner, that spacious building, known as the ROTUNDO, at the corner of Thirteenth street and Pennsylvania Avenue, as a permanent MUSEUM AND GALLERY OF FINE ARTS; The Museum contains Quadrupeds, Birds, Reptiles, Insects, Minerals, Petrification, Fossils, Shells, Artificial and Natural Curiosities; AMONGST WHICH ARE – The Arabian Camel; The Bengal Tiger, from Africa; The Kangaroo; The African Ostrich; The Bellerick Crane, &c. &c. ALSO, 20 Cosmorama VIEWS of some of the principal Cities in Europe, And other Views equally interesting. The Gallery of Paintings contains HISTORICAL LANDSCAPES, PORTRAIT and other PAINTINGS, from English, Flemish, Italian and American Artists. There is attached to the

[12] The French designation of the Louvre collection of the arts as a museum was completely anomalous for the time period when it opened in 1793 as the Muséum Français/Muséum National. Ken Arnold provides an excellent introduction to different types of museums in seventeenth and eighteenth-century England in *Cabinets for the Curious: Looking Back at Early English Museums* (Aldershot, England and Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2006). For an early history of the Louvre, see the chapter on Dominique Vivant Denon in Edward P. Alexander, *Museum Masters: Their Museums and Their Influence* (Nashville, TN: American Association for State and Local History, 1983) 81-112.

> Museum a fine, well-toned four stop-finger Organ, for the amusement of visitors.[13]

Though the proprietors gave equal billing in title to the museum and the picture gallery, they used the advertisement to promote the natural curiosities as the primary draw, followed by panoramic views. The Gallery of Paintings appears only towards the end, wedged between the views and a mechanical novelty, the four stop-finger Organ.

This chapter focuses on the various outlets for viewing prints, paintings, and sculpture in the American colonies and then United States up to and including the period of King's Gallery of Paintings. King's Gallery may not have been the only outlet for viewing paintings during the time period, but its scale and longevity in combination with its independence from the cabinets of curiosities and mechanical contrivances that prominently featured in other collections rendered it unique.

Exhibitions of the arts fell into one of two categories: galleries run by artist-proprietors and annual exhibitions mounted by benevolent institutions or artists' professional organizations. Beginning with John Smibert in the 1730s, individual artists occasionally placed their collections before public view. Their motivations ranged from generating attention for their abilities and thereby inspiring commissions, to running galleries as independent commercial enterprises with the expectation of profiting from the collection of admission fees. Typically, the artist-proprietor's motivations blended these two approaches, but one element that ties together the various offerings is the relative absence of copies from the collections. An artist might display a few copies of masterworks that he had produced as training pieces, but the majority of paintings they displayed were original compositions.

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[13] "National Museum and Gallery of Fine Arts," *Daily National Journal* (Washington, D.C.) March 22, 1831, emphasis in original. The advertisement cites October 1, 1830 as the date the advertisement originally appeared.

Not surprisingly, institutional exhibitions were more diverse in their offerings than individual artists' collections. The first institution to organize an exhibition was the Columbianum, an early and unsuccessful attempt to establish an academy in Philadelphia for the training of young American artists. It held its first and only exhibition in 1795, and the show was itself unusual in that it only included work by contemporary American artists.[14] Later institutions would combine the work of modern American artists with Old Master paintings that they either owned or received on loan from private collectors. These exhibitions were uneven in quality, and frequently the same objects exhibited year after year. In an 1828 review for the *Evening Post*, a writer under the nom de plume "Denon" wrote scathingly about the American Academy of Fine Arts Annual Exhibition:

> It contains *ninety* pictures, *thirty* of which have been seen on the walls for years,… and these are by all manner of artists, known and unknown, ancient and modern, from Salvator Rosa down to Archibald Robertson, and of all degrees of merit from the rich and glowing pencils of Sir T. Lawrence and Trumbull, down to the leaden caricatures of Parisen and Catlin. And there are *huge* copies, and *little* copies, and *whole* copies, and *half* copies, and *good* copies, and *bad* copies; indeed [it?] is a sort of Noah's Ark, in which [are] things of every kind, *clean* and *unclean*, *noble animals*, and *creeping things*.[15]

Critics of the annual exhibitions had a variety of motivations. Some, like the pseudonymous Denon, lamented the presence year after year of the same paintings and of copies of uneven quality. Others argued that the space afforded to these long-viewed

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[14] The organizers of the Columbianum Exhibition included several paintings by Benjamin West, a British painter but an artist born in the American Colonies and claimed as a countryman by Americans for his background as well as for his boundless willingness to aide younger American artists when they traveled to study in London.

[15] "The Two Academies," *Evening Post* (May 17, 1828), emphasis in original. For a history of the American Academy, see Mary Bartlett Cowdrey, *American Academy of Fine Arts and American Art-Union* (New York: The New-York Historical Society, 1953) 2 vols. For a history of the National Academy of Design, see Thomas Seir Cummings, *Historic Annals of the National Academy of Design* (Philadelphia: 1865).

paintings, copies, and even questionable originals (forgeries) would have been put to better use in exhibiting and thereby promoting native American talent.

King's approach blended the compositional structures of artist-proprietor and institutional exhibitions. Unlike other artist-proprietors who predominantly displayed their own work and perhaps a few copies, one third of the paintings King displayed were copies of other artists' works. King, in showing so many European artists' subjects, had more in common in style and content with annual exhibitions than with other artist's collections. However, King's copies did not incite the wrath of critics. On the contrary, critics often commended King's copies of European artists' works, perhaps for the quality of execution but equally because he acknowledged that they were copies, relieving his audience from the need to question provenance. What is clear, both from their pervasiveness in annual exhibitions and King's incorporation of them into his own display, is that European artists' paintings remained exceedingly popular with audiences as well as with art collectors throughout the period King maintained his Gallery. Institutions and individual collectors focused on Old Master paintings, eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century British artists, and colonial and early American productions derivative of the English grand manner tradition. Though the evidence in support of this argument is clear, and will become more so in the pages that follow, art historians rarely discuss the importance of European art in public exhibitions during this time period, an oversight that has limited the breadth of our understanding of the diverse visual field that artists and audiences explored in nineteenth-century America.

The Colonial Period

The only significant colonial American picture gallery was also the first maintained by an artist, John Smibert. It was as well the most similar in makeup to

King's Gallery of any artist's collection that pre-dated it, due to Smibert's combination of original compositions and copies and the emphasis he placed on European masterworks in his assortment of copies. Smibert arrived in the American colonies in 1728 with a training collection of copies of European masterworks as well as a few original paintings.[16] He had produced the copies primarily while traveling in Italy as a young man and intended to use them as teaching aids in his role as Professor of Fine Arts at Dean George Berkeley's proposed college in Bermuda. Though Berkeley's college was never funded and the majority of the party associated with the project returned to England, Smibert chose to remain in Boston, where he established a studio. Smibert's collection surrounded his workspace in his studio. This was not a public space, but it was accessible to a narrow range of Americans, both clients and aspiring artists, whose taste and judgment might benefit from the experience of viewing it.

Smibert is not believed to have advertised his collection or his services, but a long poem penned by Mather Byles in 1730 – "To Mr. Smibert on the sight of his Pictures" – had the effect of promoting the artist's extensive display and his accessibility to the public.[17] Byles began by characterizing the American colonies as a cultural wasteland, where science and religion had been planted, but "Politeness, and the softer Arts" were still unknown. Into this wasteland stepped Smibert. Byles mentioned "Th' Italian master," Raphael, and declared that "Vandike and Rubens show their Rival Forms, And studious Mascarene asserts his Arms." The latter referred to Smibert's portrait of Paul

[16] The best monograph and catalogue on John Smibert is Richard H. Saunders, *John Smibert: Colonial America's First Portrait Painter* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995).

[17] Not all issues of the *Boston Gazette* from 1730 survived, so it is possible that Smibert advertised. However, as Susan Rather has observed of John Singleton Copley later in the century, "the taint of trade clung to any advertiser." Smibert's choice not to advertise, as well as his willingness to admit the curious to view his collection without charging a fee, may then have reflected an aspiration to social status. Susan Rather, "Benjamin West's Professional Endgame and the Historical Conundrum of William Williams," *William And Mary Quarterly* LIX, 4 (October 2002) 830. Henry Wilder Foote, "Mr. Smibert Shows his Pictures March, 1730," *The New England Quarterly* VIII, 1 (March 1935) 18 (14-28 entire article).

Mascarene, a French Huguenot who rose to the rank of Major General in the British army and who lived in Boston. Byles also noted that Smibert exhibited "Landsckips how gay!" as well as plaster casts.[18] Though Smibert produced his copies as training pieces and intended for them to form a study collection for young artists, events unfolded in such a manner that Smibert used them to educate his audience of potential clients instead. The copies provided a framework for understanding Smibert's own work, such as his portrait of Mascarene with his outdated armor in the Van Dyck tradition, on view alongside the old master copies.[19] Smibert was not only the first artist to mount an exhibit of any kind in the Colonies, but the first to place a strong pedagogical emphasis on the intersection of old master paintings and contemporary work.

Unfortunately, no complete list of the paintings – originals and copies – that Smibert displayed in his studio has survived. However, in his monograph on the artist, Henry Wilder Foote assembled the following list of copies based on sales records and visitors' statements about the collection: *Cardinal Bentivoglio, Jan van Montfort,* and *Charles and James Stuart* after Sir Anthony Van Dyck; *The Continence of Scipio* after Poussin; *Luigi Cornaro* after Tintoretto; *Danaë* after Titian; and *Madonna della Sedia* after Raphael.[20] Other paintings mentioned as in his collection, not identified as original compositions or copies, include scenes of *Hector and Andromache* and of *Ancient Philosophers* and a copy of the 1665 portrait of *Governor John Endecott* after an

[18] It is unclear how the poem first appeared. No broadside or copy of the *Boston Gazette* that survives includes it. However, it was reproduced in London by the *Daily Courant* on April 14, 1730 and an anonymous reply, "To Mr. B--, occasioned by his verses to Mr. Smibert on seeing his Pictures" appeared in the April 13, 1730 issue of the *Boston Gazette.* Henry Wilder Foote reproduces both poems in Foote, *John Smibert, Painter* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1950) 53-57.

[19] Lorna Price, *Masterpieces from the Los Angeles County Museum of Art Collection* (Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1988) 12.

[20] The inventory of Smibert's estate sheds further light on the scale of Smibert's collection. The executor listed: "Colours & Oyls 307.16.5 portraits 60.5.4 41 History Pieces & pictures in that Taste… 13 Landsckips 2.13.2 Conversation Pictures 23.6.8… Bustoes & figures in Paris plaister & models 4.5.8 Prints and Books of Prints 11.12.8 Drawings 4.16." Transcribed in Saunders, *John Smibert,* 263.

unknown artist.[21] John Trumbull purchased two of the copies – *Cardinal Bentivoglio* and *Charles and James Stuart* – as well as a number of original paintings, from the estate of Smibert's nephew, John Moffat. The latter included, according to Trumbull's "Account Book," original subjects such as a landscape with bathing nymphs; "a small battle, an Army on their March by Michaun"; a painting by Cornelius Polenburg; and a Dutch ferry "probably by Brueghel."[22]

Though Smibert's exhibition space was more studio than gallery, its exceptional status during the artist's lifetime and its survival far past his death secured its importance to American art of the late Colonial and Early Republic periods. When Smibert died in 1752, his wife and nephew continued to run his painting-supply store and to maintain the studio Smibert had occupied above it. Smibert's family did not alter the studio's contents or context, and never attempted to transform the space into a picture gallery, but they continued to admit anyone who was interested in viewing the collection. Charles Willson Peale recalled his visit in 1768, as he was embarking on his painting career:

> In 1768-9 I visited Boston in the commencement of my painting and hunting for colours I found a colour-shop which had some figures with ornamental signs about it, these I suspect was [sic] painted by a Mr. Smibert. Becoming a little acquainted with the owner of the shop he told me that a relation of his had been a painter and he said he would give me a feast. Leading me upstairs he introduced me into a painter's room,…[23]

In 1778, John Trumbull did more than visit; he rented the room for his own studio, moving into the space still occupied by Smibert's collection. Though Trumbull purchased paintings out of the collection, he was surrounded by many more that he did

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[21] Foote, *John Smibert, Painter,* 229-231.

[22] The original manuscript pages from Trumbull's "Account Book," now at Yale, are reproduced in Irma B. Jaffee, "Found: John Smibert's *Portrait of Cardinal Guido Bentivoglio*," *Art Journal* XXXV, 3: 212.

[23] Charles Willson Peale to Rembrandt Peale, October 28, 1812. Cited by John Sartain, who relates that the letter was found amongst Rembrandt's papers after his death. John Sartain, *Reminiscences of a Very Old Man 1808-1897* (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1899) 146-147.

not acquire and therefore did not take with him when he left. The paintings Trumbull did not purchase remained in the studio when Mather Brown rented "the Upper Chamber" in 1780, followed closely by Samuel King and John Mason Furnass.[24] The most notable work remaining was the *Bermuda Group*, not sold until 1808. Scholars have speculated that the painting's size (69 ½ x 93 inches) was responsible for its late exit.[25]

Smibert's studio and collection are known to have influenced John Singleton Copley, who grew up in Boston and had the most substantive and long-standing connection to the studio of any artist. One of Copley's early sketchbooks contained a drawing of the Venus de Medici, presumably sketched from Smibert's cast. Much later, from Italy, Copley wrote to his half-brother Henry Pelham his impressions of seeing the original *Madonna della Sedia* after many years' exposure to Smibert's copy. Copley noted that Smibert's copy was

> very diferent [sic] ….[the Original] has nothing of the olive tint you see in the Copy, the read [sic] not so bricky in the faces, the whole Picture finished in a more rich and correct manner. you [sic] remem[ber] the hands of the Virgin & of the St. John, they are very incorrect in the one you have seen, but in the original they are correctly finished and the whole Picture has the Softness and general hew of Crayons, with a Perlly [sic] tint throughout.[26]

Copley's description highlights two significant points: Smibert's copy of the *Madonna della Sedia* was accurate neither in coloring nor in modeling; and Copley had spent enough time with the painting to be fully aware of its qualities. When Copley traveled to Europe he discovered the extent to which his study models had been flawed; however, prior to Smibert's arrival, aspiring artists had had no study collection to consult.

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[24] Saunders, *John Smibert*, 125.

[25] The artist John Johnston, the last occupier of the studio, sold *The Bermuda Group* to Isaac Lathrop of Plymouth, Massachusetts. Foote, *John Smibert, Painter*, 131, 123-126.

[26] *Letters and Papers of John Singleton Copley and Henry Pelham, 1739-1776* (New York: Kennedy Graphics, 1970 [1914]) 304.

John Smibert's arrival in Boston marks the beginning of broader colonial American access to the European visual arts tradition. Through Smibert, Americans were exposed to the works of European masters through originals, copies, and prints. While individual colonists who visited England or Europe during the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, as well as recent immigrants, may have had some access to original European paintings and reproductive engravings, Smibert brought a substantial body of visual material to the Colonies, and as time went on he imported prints and paintings specifically for sale to colonial Americans. For Sueton Grant, a Newport merchant, Smibert imported a number of prints: a naval scene by Giovanni Battista Britano, a Cornelius Cort engraving after Raphael's *Battle of the Elephants*, a *Virgin* after Carlo Maratta, and a set of William Hogarth's *A Harlot's Progress*.[27] Correspondence between Smibert and Arthur Pond, a print producer and distributor in London, confirms that Smibert regularly imported prints for sale in his color shop.[28] American artists' experiences in London and Europe reinforced the same preferences that Smibert displayed through his collection. He overwhelmingly favored the works of Raphael, Rubens, Van Dyck, and of the seventeenth-century Dutch masters, the same hierarchy that would continue to define many Americans' taste in art well into the nineteenth century, as a survey of Charles Bird King's Gallery of Paintings will demonstrate.

The Early Republic

John Smibert's collection did not immediately usher in other public visual arts displays. Through the end of the colonial period, what painting and sculpture there were in the colonies remained in private hands and inaccessible to all but the privileged few. However, during the Early Republic, and in particular after 1800, public exhibitions of

[27] Information from a letter held at the Newport Historical Society dated September 22, 1735.
[28] Saunders reproduces several letters between Smibert and Pond in Saunders, *John Smibert*, 102.

visual arts became increasingly common. Two categories of display dominated: galleries run by artists and exhibitions mounted by benevolent institutions. Of the collections created by artists, many combined picture galleries with collections of natural curiosities in a way that attempted to maintain the independent integrity of each. Artists advertised these as combinations of museums and picture galleries to clarify that they were made up of both components. Edward Savage mounted an exhibition whenever he opened a studio – Boston, Philadelphia, New York, and again Boston – between 1794 and his death in 1817. Rubens Peale operated Peale's Museum and Gallery of Fine Arts in New York (1825-1842); James Lambdin ran Lambdin's Museum and Gallery of Paintings (1828-1832) in Pittsburgh and then Louisville (1832-1837). The syncretic nature of these collections suggests that the proprietors thought picture galleries could not stand on their own. Some artists did display for-profit visual arts collections with varying success. Rembrandt Peale mounted a picture gallery in Philadelphia from 1812-1815; John Vanderlyn combined the visual arts with spectacular panorama displays beginning in 1817; Thomas Sully joined with James Earle in 1819 to open "Earle and Sully's Gallery," which would remain open for decades; Charles Bird King opened his Gallery of Paintings in 1824; Chester Harding opened a commercial art gallery in Boston by 1834; and George Cooke in 1844 opened his National Gallery of Painting in New Orleans.

The Early Republic also saw the introduction of traveling groups of paintings and "big picture" exhibitions that shuttled among major metropolitan areas as well as to smaller towns. These primarily were organized by the exhibiting artist to finance the production of large-scale, uncommissioned paintings and appeared in venues dedicated to temporary engagements. An informal circuit of temporary exhibitions also developed within painting gallery venues during the 1820s. These arrangements benefited both the exhibiting artists, who showed their works without traveling to manage the exhibitions

themselves, and the picture gallery proprietors, who promoted temporary exhibitions as new reasons to revisit their collections, as the permanent displays changed infrequently. Charles Bird King participated actively in the temporary exhibition circuit, and for more than fifteen years only advertised his Gallery when he had a temporary exhibit to promote.

Of the public exhibitions of the visual arts, artists' collections were the most plentiful, most accessible to the public, and thus the most influential in helping to define an American taste. However, during the Early Republic wealthy gentlemen, sometimes with the input of artists, also began to form benevolent institutions for the display of the visual arts, and their annual exhibitions also were open to the public. Two of the groups implied an educational mission by including the term "academy," in their titles: The American Academy of Fine Arts in New York and the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, both founded in 1805. However, their founders used the term academy to associate their organizations with the gravitas of the British Royal Academy and the French Academie des Beaux Arts; they had a primary goal of elevating public taste, not of the actual instruction of young American artists. The Boston Athenaeum differed from the other two institutions in that it was founded as a library in 1807 but began to display artwork in a serious way with the establishment of an annual exhibition in the spring of 1827. Members realized that, in the absence of an academy, their institution was best positioned to present the visual arts to Boston. These organizations were joined by artist-initiated groups the Society of Artists (Philadelphia, 1813) and National Academy of Design (New York, 1825). These groups also held annual exhibitions and by focusing exclusively on the works of living and primarily of American artists, they became the most reliable venue for viewing a diverse array of native American talent.

Edward Savage

Edward Savage (1761-1817) was the first American artist to mount a for-profit visual arts collection that displayed a wide array of European artistic styles. Though a self-taught painter and engraver, Savage traveled to England in the 1790s to supplement his education. During this period he became acquainted with Benjamin West and joined the ranks of the many American artists who were influential in guiding American taste towards the styles and schools embraced by the British. Best known for his monumental *Washington Family* (1796) **(Figure 1)**, Savage also expended great effort in mounting and maintaining a gallery of paintings in every city where he resided. He had already been exhibiting for six years when Charles Bird King entered his studio in 1800. After five years of training with Savage, perhaps King had already determined to open his own gallery one day, for which Savage's gallery would prove a model.

Savage's collection is well-documented both by a catalogue he published in April 1802 and by an extensive review of the collection that appeared serially in the New York *Morning Chronicle* in late 1802 and early 1803.[29] Savage likely acquired the majority of the materials for the collection during his sojourn in London; soon after his return in 1794 he opened his first exhibition, the "Columbian Exhibition of Pictures and Prints," at Franklin Hall in Boston.[30] Beyond the hope that it would prove financially beneficial, we cannot do more than speculate at the impetus for Savage's formation of a collection. However, Savage's inclusion of his 130 by 20-foot panorama of London in this Boston presentation, in combination with the timing of the opening after his return, suggests that he expended much of his time in London painting and assembling the various elements

[29] The reviews appeared serially on November 5, 6, 10, 18, and 29, 1802; December 23, 1802; and January 3, 1803.

[30] "This Day, will be opened at Franklin Hall, South-End, Boston, the Columbian Exhibition of Picture and Prints, by Edward Savage," "Columbian Exhibition," *Massachusetts Mercury*, May 27; August 1, 1794. The August advertisement announced that the exhibition would close on the 9th of that month.

that would form the exhibition. Savage relocated to Philadelphia in 1795 and placed his exhibition on view there on George Washington's birthday, February 22, 1796 in what he called the "Columbian Gallery." This appears to have been the first time an American proprietor referred to his exhibition space as a gallery. Americans likely borrowed the term from the British nobility, who frequently exhibited their painting collections in long, narrow corridors lit by windows on each side, which they referred to as galleries.[31] In Philadelphia, Savage described the exhibition as a "large collection of ancient and modern Paintings and Prints."[32] He used similar language when he moved the exhibition to New York in 1801: "a large Collection of ancient and modern Paintings, Prints, and Sculpture…productions of the first [i.e. most important] Artists."[33] After exhibiting his London panorama in Philadelphia, he traveled with it to New York (1797) and Charleston, South Carolina (1798), simultaneously painting portraits in those cities. In 1800, Savage was again exhibiting in Philadelphia, describing the collection as including "several of the first masters in Europe, together with some original American Historical Paintings."[34]

Savage's collection appears to have reached its largest size with its debut in New York in 1801. A catalogue of the collection dated April 1802 lists 214 works on display in two rooms. It notes that 110 were oil paintings; presumably the rest were prints, though the spartan descriptions render it impossible to determine which were which, or

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[31] According to the Oxford English Dictionary, Shakespeare first used the term gallery in print to refer to a collection of paintings in *Henry VI*, and the same usage appears in British texts through the mid-nineteenth century. Online version, September 2011. http://www.oed.com.ezproxy.lib.utexas.edu/view/Entry/76266; accessed 30 November 2011. Earlier version first published in *New English Dictionary*, 1898. Edward P. Alexander, *Museum Masters: Their Museums and Their Influence* (Nashville, TN: American Association for State and Local History, 1983) 3.

[32] "Columbian Gallery," *Gazette of the United States*, February20, 1796.

[33] "Columbian Gallery," *Mercantile Advertiser*, November 18, 1801. Transcribed in Rita Gottesman, *Arts and Crafts in New York, 1800-1804* (New York: Printed for the New-York Historical Society, 1965) 25.

[34] *Aurora*, 4 April 1800. Quoted by Ellen Miles in "Edward Savage," *American National Biography*, ed. John A Garraty and Mark C Carnes, 24 vols. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999) XIX: 316.

how many of the paintings were copies versus (presumed) original old masters. Savage, like Smibert, included a large number of works by or after European artists, though he also featured a number of recent British artists in his collection: Benjamin West (12), Sir Joshua Reynolds (3), George Romney (2), Angelica Kauffman (1), William Westall (1), and John Bacon (1).[35] He exhibited a few works by Americans, in particular Gilbert Stuart (3), whose full-length *George Washington* would have been a significant draw in 1802, just two years after the President's death. Savage otherwise showed a preference for French, Dutch and Flemish paintings. With a few exceptions – Titian (1), Raphael (2), Michelangelo (1) Rosa (2) – Savage concentrated his Continental Europe collecting and copying on artists from further north. In particular, he exhibited eight works by Charles Le Brun and many paintings by lesser-known French artists. He also exhibited works by Rubens (3), Rembrandt (1), Hemskirk (2), Tiebout (1), Teniers (1) and sundry other works that appear derivative of the Dutch and Flemish traditions. For instance, entries 61, "The Chymist" (after Ostade?); 75, "The Hay-Makers" (after Brueghel?); 79, "Cottager;" and 145, "Dogs and dead Game."[36]

In 1802, Savage acquired the American Museum and renamed his expanded collection the Columbian Gallery of Art and City Museum.[37] In an advertisement from that year, Savage described the combined institutions:

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[35] John Bacon was a sculptor; the reference to *The Earl of Chatham's Monument* (No. 36 in the catalogue) likely refers to a print after that work.

[36] "New York, April 6, 1802. Columbian Gallery, at the Pantheon, No. 80, Greenwich-Street, Near the Battery." Photocopy from the Ryerson Library, Art Institute of Chicago. I would like to thank Ellen Miles for sharing this with me. It was bound with "Catalogue of the Pictures, &c. in the Shakespeare Gallery, No. 11, Park, New York: 1802."

[37] The City Museum had been founded by the Tammany Society in 1790 under the direction of Gardiner Baker. The collection passed through multiple owners, ultimately coming under the control of Phineas T. Barnum in 1841, and survived past the Civil War. Though Baker and the Tammany Society stated as the museum's mission the collection of material related to the history of the United States, in reality it functioned as a general cabinet of curiosities. At first, all visitors were admitted free. Within a few months that changed, however – only society members were admitted gratis; all others paid two shillings (twenty-five cents) or a year for a dollar. The Society, which had never intended to take on the role of museum

> This elegant place of genteel resort, is replete with objects highly gratifying to every rank of citizens, there are displayed in rich profusion, together with a valuable collection of curiosities of nature, the elegancies of art, in the richest collection of valuable paintings ever exhibited on the shores of Columbia. E. Savage.[38]

This advertisement is rich with insight into Savage's strategies and attitudes towards his collection and towards his public. When he introduced his painting collection to the New York public in 1801, he invited the attention of "the Ladies and Gentlemen of New-York."[39] His 1802 reference to "every rank of citizens" veers from his earlier address and indicates that he had in a short time redefined his understanding of his potential audience, expanding its breadth from the cultured few to embrace a republican attitude towards the education of all citizens. The addition of natural curiosities presumably occasioned the shift; other museum proprietors advertised their natural curiosities as spectacles, emphasizing the exotic and unusual, to draw in a wide spectrum of the population. Charles Willson Peale was particularly direct, arguing over the years that his collections simultaneously entertained, educated, and ennobled republican audiences.[40] Proprietors,

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proprietor, became frustrated at the costs involved in maintaining the collection and when their activities and interests became increasingly political, they shed the collection, giving it to Mr. Baker. Cut loose of his primary funding, Baker increased his investment in popular amusements in order to stimulate attendance, though he attempted to retain the focus on scholarship as well. He was however not able to tread that fine line as successfully as was Charles Willson Peale. After Baker's death in 1798, the collection languished through receivership and a short period under the name "Waldron's Museum," before Savage purchased it and appended it to his visual arts collection. Joel J. Orosz, *Curators and Culture: The Museum Movement in America, 1740-1870* (Tuscaloosa and London: University of Alabama Press, 1900) 60.

[38] *Mercantile Advertiser*, August 21, 1802. Transcribed in Gottesman, *The Arts and Crafts in New York*, 26.

[39] *Mercantile Advertiser*, November 18, 1802. Transcribed in Gottesman, *The Arts and Crafts in New York*, 25.

[40] In a "Memorial to the Pennsylvania Legislature" in 1795 that was reprinted in *Dunlap and Claypoole's American Daily Advertiser* (December 26, 1795), Peale wrote: "Among the various subjects which claim your attention, none brings with them so uniformly their own reward, as those connected with the encouragement of the Arts and Sciences. In a country whose institutions all depend on the virtue of the people, which in turn is secure only as they are well informed, the promotion of knowledge is the first of duties." Lillian B. Miller, ed., *The Selected Papers of Charles Willson Peale and His Family* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press for the National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, 1988) Vol. II, Part 1, 136-137.

even if primarily motivated by patriotic sentiment, could not ignore the financial incentive to broaden their reach, for the wider their target market, the more revenue they could anticipate from admissions fees.

Savage consistently drew upon patriotic sentiment to promote his exhibitions. He called the 1794 Boston offering the "Columbian Exhibition of Pictures and Prints," and every subsequent exhibition included "Columbian" as a descriptor. In his first advertisement in New York, Savage singled out, among his own paintings, only patriotic subjects: "the Washington Family, the Goddess of America, Columbus's first landing in the new world, all the size of life."[41] He also frequently staged his openings to coincide with dates significant to the young country. When he announced the combined exhibition of the Columbian Gallery and City Museum, he pointed out to the public that he would open the venture on July 17, 1802, "the Anniversary of the memorable battle of Bunker's Hill," lest anyone fail to register his calculated patriotism.[42]

From 1796, Savage anchored his exhibition with the life-size *Washington Family* (84 ¾ x 111 7/8 in.), which depicts George and Martha Washington with their adopted children George Washington Parke Custis and Eleanor Parke Custis, and a steward. Not only did Savage advertise the painting as the centerpiece of the collection; it was also available to visitors for purchase as an engraving beginning in March, 1798. The monumental painting may have been in Savage's sights when he offered in 1789 to paint George Washington's portrait for Harvard College. Perhaps he believed Washington would be more likely to agree to sit to him if he had the imprimatur of Harvard behind

[41] *Mercantile Advertiser*, November 18, 1801. Transcribed in Gottesman, *The Arts and Crafts in New York*, 25.
[42] *The Daily Advertiser*, June 10, 1802. Transcribed in Gottesman, *The Arts and Crafts in New York*, 26.

him.[43] John Adams' request not only for a copy of the Harvard portrait but also for the portrait of Martha Washington extended Savage's access to the First Family. There are no records for his initial contact with the children, though a 1790 engraving after a study of George Washington Parke Custis by Savage fits within the timeline of George and Martha Washington's sittings.[44] Savage traveled to London with his large painting and apparently worked on it while there, perhaps planning initially to publish the engraving while still in London. However, he returned home with the painting still unfinished, and asked that all of the Washingtons sit again for their portraits in order to update the likenesses. This was particularly important for the children, who had grown since 1789. Savage placed the finished painting on view when he opened the Philadelphia Columbian Gallery on George Washington's birthday in 1796.

When Savage acquired the American Museum, he increased his patriotic rhetoric by joining the chorus of naturalists who celebrated the United States' rich natural resources. In the same advertisement that referred to Bunker Hill, Savage connected the natural curiosities within his collection to the United States' exceptional status as a New World by poetically referring to the land as "the shores of Columbia."[45] Savage thus joined his voice to the debate over the relative value of the natural resources of the Old

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[43] Joseph Willard, the president of Harvard, wrote to Washington to request the sittings: "…Mr. Savage, the Bearer of this, who is a Painter and is going to New York, has called on me, and of his own accord, has politely and generously offered to take your Portrait for the University, if you will be so kind as to sit." George Washington Papers, Manuscript Division, LC; photocopy, NGA, courtesy of Dorothy Twohig, editor of the Papers of George Washington, University of Virginia, Charlottesville. Reproduced in Ellen Miles, *American Paintings of the Eighteenth Century* (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 1995).

[44] For a history of the various Savage-Washington Family sittings and the development of *The Washington Family*, see Miles, *American Paintings of the Eighteenth Century*, 146-158. For the engraving after *George Washington Parke Custis*, see Figure 3, p. 149

[45] "This elegant place of genteel resort, is replete with objects highly gratifying to every rank of citizens, there are displayed in rich profusion, together with a valuable collection of curiosities of nature, the elegancies of art, in the richest collection of valuable paintings ever exhibited on the shores of Columbia." "To the Citizens of New York," *Mercantile Advisor* (August 21, 1802). Transcribed in Gottesman, *Arts & Crafts in New York*, 26.

and New Worlds. Thomas Jefferson had written his *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1787) specifically to respond to and to refute assertions by French naturalist George Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon regarding the inferiority of the American climate and the degradation the climate caused in plant and animal life.[46]

> 1, The skeleton of the mammoth (for so the incognitum has been called) bespeaks an animal of six times the cubic volume of the elephant, as Mons. De Buffon has admitted. 2, The grinders are five times as large, are square, and the grinding surface studded with four or five rows of blunt points: whereas those of the elephant are broad and thin, and their grinding surface flat.[47]

Jefferson's argument for the superiority of the American mammoth (mastodon) over the African Elephant in particular became important after Charles Willson Peale excavated two nearly complete mastodon skeletons in New York State in 1801. In late 1802 Savage displayed a painting by Rembrandt Peale of one of the skeletons, focusing in his advertisement on the massive size of the to-scale painting:

> PEALE'S MAMMOTH. – Phenomenon – The public are informed that a painting of the Bones of that wonderful Stupendous Animal; the Mammoth, exactly of the same size and dimensions of Mr. [Rembrandt] Peale's is just finished,... Those who have not seen the substance, may now be gratified with a view as large and accurate as the original.
>
> N.B. The whole Picture contains 240 square feet and the back view is a finished resemblance of the outlet of Lake Ontario.[48]

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[46] Jefferson repeated the Comte de Buffon's arguments within his text in order to then refute them, summarizing them as follows: "The opinion advanced by the Count de Buffon is, 1, That the animals, common both to the old and new world, are smaller in the latter. 2, That those peculiar to the new are on a smaller scale. 3, That those which have been domesticated in both, have degenerated in America; and, 4, That on the whole it exhibits fewer species." Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia* (Richmond, VA: J. W. Randolph, 1853) 48.

[47] Ibid., 45.

[48] "Peale's Mammoth," *Mercantile Advertiser* (October 5, 1802). Transcribed in Gottesman, *Arts & Crafts in New York,* 27.

With this exhibition, Savage achieved a synthesis of the many disparate components that defined the Columbian Gallery of Art and City Museum: patriotism, spectacle, the visual arts, and natural curiosities.

Savage's business model differed substantially from King's. While King focused his attention in large part on the European canon as it was understood by the British, Savage downplayed the role of his own copies and prints in order to emphasize more specifically the American elements of the collection. Savage also used his gallery as a point of sale for paintings – he listed fourteen for sale in his 1801 catalogue of the collection – as well as for engravings after his own work. These included stipple engravings after his *Washington Family*, as well as engravings after other paintings, including *Columbus Arriving in the New World, Mts. Aetna and Vesuvius Erupting*, and "many other Prints published by E. Savage too lengthy to enumerate," as one advertisement boasted.[49] As an apprentice King learned flexibility and business savvy from Savage's methods of promotion, though he would himself move in a different direction. There is no evidence that he ever sold a painting out of the collection, and he only rarely copied his own paintings on commission. Instead, he emphasized the paintings (his own productions and copies) and marketed the collection through periodic single picture exhibitions. These large-scale paintings did not address patriotic themes, and he promoted them for their intrinsic excellence as works of art. Impassioned patriotism may have waned to some extent in the intervening decades, but many communities continued to celebrate George Washington's birthday with balls in the 1820s, and the wild enthusiasm over General Lafayette's visit to the United States in 1825 demonstrates that a patriotic appeal still had marketing potential. King, then, aimed

[49] "Columbian Gallery," *Mercantile Advertiser,* November 18, 1801. Also appeared in the *Mercantile Advertiser,* April 20, 1802 and the *Commercial Advertiser*, June 14, 1802. Transcribed in Gottesman, *Arts and Crafts in New York*, 25.

to elevate the taste of the American public through aesthetic education rather than to appeal to his public's patriotism as had Savage decades earlier.

Gilbert Stuart

Gilbert Stuart (1755-1828) briefly maintained a studio and picture gallery in Washington, D.C. from the end of 1803 through July of 1805. Stuart was drawn to the new site of the federal government, which had only relocated to the city in January of 1800. He hoped to procure portrait commissions from the assembled politicians and evidently also to receive commissions to copy his portraits of famous American statesmen such as his already iconic *George Washington*.[50] Stuart consequently contracted Benjamin Latrobe to design a two-room, one-story structure one block north of Pennsylvania Avenue on C Street, NW between 4 ½ and 6 Streets to hold his studio and picture gallery.[51] Unfortunately, the population was as yet small and mostly seasonal. Though he remained busy, Stuart appears to have saturated the market with his work in

[50] Carrie Rebora Barratt and Ellen G. Miles, *Gilbert Stuart* (New York, New Haven, and London: Metropolitan Museum of Art and Yale University Press, 2004) 240.

[51] Latrobe wrote to the builder: "There should be a simple washboard in both Mr. Stuart's rooms. You may look into your tool Chest for the design. It is I think necessary, to keep the Picture frame from hurting the Wall. As to the battening I think both the Shew room and painting room will want it on the North, and East sides: For we all know how injurious damp is to pictures. On the North no battening would be wanted below the Shed roof were it not for the projection of plaistering which it will occasion." Benjamin Latrobe to John Lenthall, September 26, 1803, in *The Correspondence and Miscellaneous Papers of Benjamin Henry Latrobe* (New Haven: Yale University Press for the Maryland Historical Society, 1983-) Vol. I, 326. Cited in Barratt and Miles, *Gilbert Stuart*, 239.

short order.[52] To make matters worse, Stuart fell ill and was unable to work for some months.[53]

Whether Stuart's income would have satisfied his ambitions for his Washington venture had he not become ill is impossible to say; it has been estimated that he painted approximately forty paintings during his tenure in the city.[54] There is no evidence that Stuart charged admission to his portrait gallery. The gallery's role was to promote Stuart's skills as a portraitist in much the same way that John Smibert had advertised his skills through his studio display so many years before, and to encourage commissions for copies. This was, then, not the sort of stand-alone venture that Edward Savage had assembled or that many other artist-proprietors would attempt in the years to come.

Charles Willson Peale

Though Edward Savage had the most extensive visual arts collection among the artist-proprietors of this early period, the most famous (and most-studied) artist-proprietor of the Early Republic was Charles Willson Peale. Peale first opened a portrait gallery of Revolutionary and Enlightenment heroes in 1786. Three decades later, in 1818, he advertised the portrait collection as consisting of "characters distinguished during the American Revolution and since, besides Philosophers of Europe and

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[52] Gilbert Stuart's time in Washington has been described as a failure. However, recently Lynn Bradshaw has recast Stuart's Washington sojourn as a success based on the volume of portraits he produced during a relatively short period of time, particularly considering he became ill. Bradshaw is particularly convincing in her argument that Stuart's portrait of Elizabeth Patterson Bonaparte inspired other women to request that he take their portraits, all attired in gauzy, empire-waist white gowns. Lynn Bradshaw, "Patterson V. Bonaparte and the Interesting Case of a Marriage, the Validity of Which Was Argued in 1861 by French Attorney, Antoine-Louise Berryer and a Beautiful Bride, Elizabeth Patterson, as Portrayed in 1804 by the Artist Gilbert Stuart, in Washington City," Master's Thesis, University of Texas at Austin, 2012.

[53] Latrobe wrote of Stuart's circumstances during his illness: He has shut himself up in a little building never intended for a habitation but only for a painting room; where he boards himself, after a fashion, with the assistance of his Manservant, when he can get him to the place, and where he sleeps." Benjamin Latrobe to John Vaughan, March 12, 1805, in *The Correspondence and Miscellaneous Papers of Benjamin Henry Latrobe*, Vol. II, 24-25.

[54] Barratt and Miles, *Gilbert Stuart*, 240.

America."[55] By this time, however, paintings made up only a fraction of Peale's display, for soon after he opened his portrait gallery he added to it a cabinet of curiosities that expanded to over 8,000 objects, from plant, mineral, and animal specimens to American Indian artifacts, to mechanical wonders such as the physiognotrace. The same 1818 broadside gives a sense of the variety and sheer volume of objects:

> The Long room displays an elegant range of cases, containing Birds from every quarter of the globe to the number of 1240, 180 Portraits of characters distinguished during the American revolution, and since, besides Philosophers of Europe and America, a splendid collection of minerals, Fossils, and miscellaneous curiosities, amounting to near 8000 articles; various optical amusements, and Lukens's model of perpetual motion.

Peale's paintings participated in a Linnean construction of the natural world that Peale celebrated with the rest of his collection.[56] Carl Linnaeus (1707-1778) is known today as the father of modern taxonomy. He standardized the practice of binomial nomenclature but more significantly for Peale, he generated a hierarchical structure for the classification of nature, which he separated into three Kingdoms, followed by Classes, Orders, Genera, and Species. This structure provided for a rationale for the organization of the universe from more to less important. As documented by his monumental 1822 painting *The Artist in his Museum*, Charles Willson Peale hung the portraits of worthies in two rows above the taxonomic display of birds beneath **(Figure 2)**. Within the museum, Peale ordered all of creation. The portraits thus were not on view for their

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[55] Charles Willson Peale, "Peale's Museum, in the State House, Philadelphia" (1818). Microfiche 16,676 No. 45294 in the APS series. In 1854, the portraits from Peale's Philadelphia Museum were sold at auction. The catalogue lists 269 lots, though at this late date it is unclear that all of the paintings in the sale had been in Peale's collection during his lifetime. *Catalogue of Peale's Museum National Portrait Gallery, to be sold without reserve, on Friday, October 6, 1854, by M. Thomas & Sons, Auctioneers,* reproduced in *Peale Family Papers, 1803-1854,* Reel 21, frames 164-182.

[56] So great was Peale's respect for Carl Linnaeus that he named one of his children Charles Linnaeus Peale after the naturalist.

stylistic or aesthetic appeal, but rather for their taxonomic value as stand-ins for the real thing.

Peale publically announced his retirement from portraiture in 1794, in order to "encrease the subjects of the Museum with all his powers, whilst life and health will admit of it."[57] Though he never gave up painting entirely, Peale through his announcement re-identified himself professionally as a naturalist. And indeed, of all of the collections of this period that combined visual arts with natural curiosities, Peale's Philadelphia Museum focused least on its painting collection. However, Charles Willson Peale was by no means alone. Edward Savage had made a similar move at the same time Peale was expanding his collection at the end of the eighteenth century. And this approach continued; Peale's sons Rembrandt and Rubens, and James Lambdin in the 1820s, all combined visual arts collections with natural curiosities.[58]

Rembrandt Peale, John Vanderlyn, and Rubens Peale

Much-studied though Charles Willson Peale's career has been, his sons' enterprises focused far more on the visual arts and their efforts support more valuable comparisons to Charles Bird King's Gallery of Paintings. Rembrandt (1778-1860) and Rubens Peale (1784-1865), like their father, included both visual arts and curiosities collections within the museums they opened in Baltimore and New York in the 1810s and 1820s. However, their ambition to display the visual arts was greater than their father's,

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[57] "Charles W. Peale respectfully informs the Public…," *Dunlap and Claypoole's American Daily Advertiser*, April 24, 1794.

[58] Lambdin many years later recounted the influence of the Peales in his autobiography. Rubens Peale encouraged him to open a museum in the same vein as the New York Peale Museum, which was in turn based on the Philadelphia Peale Museum. Lambdin as late as 1872 recalled in a letter many details of the Philadelphia Museum's layout and contents. "Journal of J.R. Lambdin," division of Archives and Manuscripts, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Harrisburg., PA, MG-6, GM-190, box 2, pt. 2, p. 13. J. R. Lambdin to F. M. Etting, October 12, 1872, Etting Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Published in Gaylord M. Lambdin and Paris L. Lambdin, *Lambdin Chronicles*, (Alcoa, TN: Gaylord M. Lambdin, 1991) 36-37.

and their displays were correspondingly more extensive, increasing the scope of the painting collections well beyond portraiture. Rembrandt even briefly ran a stand-alone gallery of paintings in Philadelphia. John Vanderlyn (1775-1852) was a contemporary, friend, and colleague of Rembrandt Peale who shared the latter's political and aesthetic outlook, though ultimately with less success.

The Peale sons came to their roles from different paths. Rembrandt Peale was a professional artist, both portraitist and history painter. Following in his father's footsteps, he traveled to England in 1802 to study with Benjamin West, before turning away from British and toward French art. He studied in Paris in 1808 and again in 1809-1810. Rembrandt emulated contemporary French art both in style and in subject matter, and returned home to Philadelphia convinced that there was an American audience for a gallery of paintings inspired by his European study. "Rembrandt's New Picture Gallery," where he displayed original compositions as well as copies after other artists, opened in Philadelphia at the end of 1811. In 1812, he renamed it the "Apollodorian Gallery," and in announcing that change he noted that he had recently received "a valuable deposit of pictures."[59] These were old master paintings that Peale hoped would increase attendance. A visitor wrote that Peale at this time had on view "many valuable pictures from his own easel, and of the old school."[60] William Oedel has written that Peale followed a "gallery formula," which required the display of representative works from different categories of paintings: "a historical portrait, a landscape, a mythological or historical composition, a portrait commission, and a copy of an old master painting."[61] These paintings, taken together as a group, functioned as an advertisement for the abilities and education of the

[59] "The Apollodorian Gallery of Paintings," *Poulson's American Daily Advertiser,* June 30, 1812.
[60] Philo Pictor, "The Fine Arts," *Poulson's American Daily Advertiser,* July 16, 1812.
[61] William T. Oedel, "After Paris: Rembrandt Peale's Apollodorian Gallery," *Winterthur Portfolio* 27.1 (Spring 1992): 14.

exhibiting artist. While Rembrandt desired to produce more than portraits and may have hoped that his original compositions might encourage commissions for more such works, he was pragmatic in his understanding that Americans were unlikely to commission anything other than portraits. In his own words: "I was abundantly patronized in portrait painting, but could not suppress an increasing desire to engage in greater works; I therefore built a Gallery."[62] In effect, the Gallery functioned as the patron for Rembrandt's uncommissioned history paintings, visitors' fees offsetting the time and materials costs. King would treat his Gallery in the same way. He produced many original compositions and copies for the Gallery with no intention of selling them out of the collection. Rembrandt also was politically idealistic and hoped optimistically that his gallery display would influence his visitors' aesthetic sensibilities into agreement with his belief that French neoclassical painting was the most appropriate style for American art and culture. Unfortunately, he misjudged his audience's enthusiasm for Neoclassicism, the admissions fees he collected did not provide the financial support he had anticipated, and he closed the Apollodorian Gallery in 1815.

Rembrandt Peale shared his passionate belief in French Neoclassicism as the basis for a distinctly American art with fellow expatriate artist John Vanderlyn.[63] Vanderlyn first traveled to Paris in 1796 and returned for an extended stay in Europe from 1803 to 1815. During this longer sojourn he and Peale, who both were influenced by the republican philosophies of Thomas Jefferson and Aaron Burr (Vanderlyn's primary sponsor), met and agreed that American art required a break from the British traditions of

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[62] C. Edwards Lester, *The Artists of America: A Series of Biographical Sketches of American Artists* (New York: Baker & Scribner, 1846) 208.

[63] This is the organizing thesis of William T. Oedel, "John Vanderlyn: French Neoclassicism and the Search for an American Art" (Ph.D. diss., University of Delaware, 1981).

the colonial past.[64] The artists' galleries made an argument for the embrace of French politics through aesthetics. Vanderlyn went so far as to display two images of Napoleon – a copy by a student of David of one of the master's portraits and a sculpted bust by Simon-Louis Boizot – when he first opened his collection to the public in 1816. These joined his original compositions *Marius Amidst the Ruins of Carthage*, *Ariadne Asleep on the Island of Naxos*, and his own portraits of Presidents Madison and Monroe **(Figures 3 & 4)**. He also displayed copies of *Danaë* after Titian, the heads of the two central figures in Veronese's *Marriage at Cana*, and two cupids after Jacob Jordaens.[65]

Vanderlyn quickly augmented his Gallery display with the addition of a visual spectacle, the panorama. In 1817, Vanderlyn opened "The Rotunda," a building in lower Manhattan that he designed and built to accommodate the display of dramatic panoramas on the second floor and of his permanent collection of original compositions, copies, and old masters on the first floor. The first panorama Vanderlyn exhibited, *View of the Interior of the City of Paris*, was another bold admission of the artist's admiration for French culture and indicative of his belief that Americans shared his disposition **(Figure 5)**.[66] Vanderlyn hoped to draw the public in with the spectacle of the panorama, and then to educate them in the higher branches of the visual arts with his exhibit of his own collection on the first floor.[67] His own panorama, *The Palace and Gardens of Versailles*,

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[64] Oedel, "Apollodorian Gallery," 2. David Lubin makes a similar argument about Vanderlyn in *Picturing a Nation:* "By sending his protégé to the Paris of the Directoire instead of to royalist London, where the expatriate Benjamin West held court to promising artists from the new republic, Burr not only made a statement about American cultural independence from England but indicated allegiance to the ideas of revolutionary France. From the start of his career, Vanderlyn thus occupied a symbolically anti-British position." David Lubin, *Picturing a Nation: Art and Social Change in Nineteenth-Century America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994) 9.

[65] JV, "Mr. Vanderlyn's Paintings," 1816, Misc. Coll., SH. Oedel, "John Vanderlyn," 418-419.

[66] Vanderlyn leased this panorama from the London firm of Robert Barker. Oedel, "John Vanderlyn," 427.

[67] No description of the interior of the Rotunda survives. In an 1819 advertisement, Vanderlyn listed that "The paintings of MARIUS, on the ruins of Carthage, and of Ariadne in the island of Naxos, executed by Mr. Vanderlyn, are now exhibited at the Rotunda./ Also, a full length portrait of Napoleon, in his imperial robes, by a celebrated French artist, and other interesting pictures./ In the ensuing week will be open for

also celebrated French culture when it went on view on June 29, 1819. Vanderlyn proved no more capable of sustaining the Rotunda than had Rembrandt Peale his Apollodorian Gallery. However, Vanderlyn's failure was more dramatic and debilitating than Peale's. Peale opened a successful joint picture gallery and museum in Baltimore in the same year he closed the Apollodorian Gallery, while Vanderlyn struggled under the debts he had amassed in the construction of the Rotunda, the materials and time he expended in producing his panorama of Versailles, and the fees he paid for the display of other panoramas. Vanderlyn proved a poor businessman as well as a poor judge of American taste in general. The Rotunda brought in $1,240 in its first year, while his outlay on the Versailles panorama alone was $2,000.[68] And Vanderlyn was incapable of understanding the reason his panorama did not interest a wider audience. In a letter to the expatriate Francophile David Bailie Warden, Vanderlyn admitted that choosing Versailles as a subject had been a strategic error, but he attributed audiences' lack of interest to the wrong source: a lack of familiarity with the place itself.[69] In reality the subject matter reflected a lifestyle – French aristocracy married to the severity of Neoclassicism – that was incomprehensible and completely distasteful to many Americans.[70]

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exhibition, the panorama view of the palace and garden of Versailles, executed by Mr. Vanderlyn." "The Rotunda," *New York Evening Post* (June 8, 1819). For additional description of the Rotunda and in particular the construction of the panorama space, see Albert Ten Eyck Gardner and Laurence J. Majewski, *John Vanderlyn's Panoramic View of the Palace and Gardens of Versailles* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1956) n.p.

[68] Kevin Avery, *John Vanderlyn's Panoramic Views of the Palace and Gardens of Versailles* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1988) 24.

[69] Had I bestowed my time and attention in painting a view of N. York, instead of Versailles, I should I am now convinced have reaped more profits – but [I was not] aware of the general ignorance here respecting Versailles, and its former brilliant court etc. – it is to this that I attribute its ill success." John Vanderlyn to David B. Warden, August 2, 1824, Hoes Collection, SH. Cited by Oedel, "John Vanderlyn," 434.

[70] Oedel has written: "the subject itself was esoteric; to American audiences it resounded with references to monarchy, popery, and luxury. In his earnest desire to educate the public, Vanderlyn had failed to read its vital signs and produced a painting that had no root in American culture. The *Versailles* was an imposition on a grand scale: instead of being uplifting, it could only be read as a reminder of American cultural backwardness and of the need to emulate the French example…. The public grasped facts – portraits, events, dates, places; Vanderlyn offered metaphors and allegories." Oedel, "John Vanderlyn," 433.

Neither Rembrandt Peale nor John Vanderlyn succeeded in attracting enough visitors to support their galleries. The Versailles panorama showed Vanderlyn to be incapable of reconciling his own enthusiasm for French Neoclassicism with Americans' democratic leanings. Both artists' embrace of Greek and Roman history and of the nudity often required by such narratives provides further evidence of their miscalculation of the American market and of American interest in Neoclassical style and ideals. They believed that classically inspired nudes had the potential to elevate the public taste. Simultaneously (and perhaps incongruously) they hoped that criticism of the paintings as questionably moral spectacles would boost attendance among the curious. In Paris, Vanderlyn had copied Correggio's *Antiope* and *Leda and the Swan* as well as a Titian *Danaë*; at the same time he painted a nude of his own conception, *Ariadne Asleep on the Island of Naxos* (c. 1812).[71] Rembrandt for his part began painting *The Roman Daughter* (1811), an original composition, soon after his return from Paris. The painting does not depict a nude, but the image was nonetheless scandalous **(Figure 6)**. Its subject, which Peale drew from classical history, is that of a young woman feeding her father at her own breast. In 1814 the Baltimore *Federal Gazette* related recounted the story behind the painting as that of a young woman, Xantippe, who "nourished her father [Cimonus] in prison, where he was condemned to be starved to death, none being permitted to enter the cell without being strictly searched."[72] Though the young woman bares only one breast, Peale appears to have chosen his subject not simply for its moral of selfless charity and

[71] Oedel, "Apollodorian Gallery," 9.

[72] The Baltimore *Federal Gazette* is quoted in Wilbur H. Hunter, "Rembrandt Peale's *The Roman Daughter*," *Antiques* 102, no. 6 (December 1972) 1073. The story appears in the work of the first century A.D. historian Valerius Maximus, with different names for the father (Cimon) and daughter (Pero). Valerius Maximus, *Memorable Acts and Sayings of the Ancient Romans* (London: Printed by Benjamin Crayle and John Fish, 1684) Book 5, Chapter 4: 232-233. Immediately preceding this story, Valerius Maximus relates a similar, but Roman, tale of a woman who nursed her mother at her breast while the latter was imprisoned. This tale also appears in Pliny's *Natural History*, trans. H. Rackham, 10 vols. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1942-1980) book 7, chapter 36, sec. 121, 2:587.

for its classical history, but to engage in the debate over the nude that had consumed Philadelphia since Adolph Wertmüller's exhibition of his *Danaë and the Shower of Gold* five years earlier, in 1806.[73] The story Rembrandt chose to paint was well-known to Philadelphians from a popular play by Scottish playwright Arthur Murphy titled *The Grecian Daughter*, though Peale depicted a scene that took place offstage, focusing on the moment where Xantippe feeds her father at her breast.[74] Their concealment, and their fear of discovery, almost beg the viewer to enter into a dialogue over the propriety of representing the subject in the first place. The critic for *The Port Folio* reflected on the difficulty of the subject, praising "the design and execution," but at the same time refusing to approve of

> the female figure, [which] is far from being graceful, and conveys but a faint idea of that extreme delicacy and beauty so perceivable in the female figures of the ancients…. This picture, however, is certainly upon the whole a very meritorious production, and it is only to be regretted, that the artist had not chosen a subject, wherein he could have displayed his talents to more advantage, and better fitted for public exhibition.[75]

This painting was exactly the type of work Peale envisioned for the gallery/patron. The painting's scale, just over 7 x 5 feet, was too large to interest the few collectors interested in acquiring American art at the time, and Peale later recalled that "This picture was painted con amore & was not intended for sale."[76]

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[73] Charles Willson Peale wrote to Benjamin Henry Latrobe of Wertmuller's *Danae:* "Such subjects may be good to shew [*sic*] artists talents, but in my opinion not very proper for public exhibition – I like no art which can raise a blush on a lady's cheek." Peale to Latrobe, May 13, 1805; F:IIA/34.

[74] Murphy also changes the names of the protagonists. In the notes that accompany the script, Murphy writes that he set the play in Sicily during the 4th Century, BCE, when Timoleon of Corinth laid siege to Syracuse during the reign of Dionysius the Younger. Arthur Murphy, *The Grecian Daughter, a Tragedy. As it is acted at the Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane* (Cambridge, Chadwyck-Healey, 1994 for Literature Online [London 1772]) 63-64.

[75] G.M., "Review of the Second Annual Exhibition," *The Port Folio*, n.s., 8, no. 1 (July 1812) 20-21.

[76] Rembrandt Peale to Rev. John Pierpont, August 7, 1823, F: VIA/3.

When he realized that he could not sustain the Apollodorian Gallery, Rembrandt Peale abandoned it in favor of a museum in Baltimore more akin to his father's Philadelphia Museum.[77] Rembrandt called his new endeavor the "Baltimore Museum and Gallery of the Fine Arts." He attempted to maintain the integrity of the painting collection, as the name of the institution suggests, by placing it in its own exhibition space, and by providing access to all elements of the collection through payment of a single admission fee. He also was the first gallery proprietor to engage canvases for temporary exhibition. In 1820 for instance, Rembrandt displayed Vanderlyn's *Marius Amid the Ruins of Carthage* and *Ariadne Asleep on the Island of Naxos*.[78] Rubens Peale continued the practice of bringing in exhibition pieces after he took over management of the Baltimore Museum in the 1820s. In 1823, he displayed Henry Sargent's *Christ Entering Jerusalem* and Thomas Sully's copy of *Capuchin Chapel* **(Figure 9)**. *Capuchin Chapel* illusionistically presented a group of Capuchin monks at worship. In its different iterations, the original by Marius Granet as well as numerous copies, *Capuchin Chapel* proved the most successful single-picture exhibition piece during the 1820s.[79] Later in the decade, Rubens exhibited William Dunlap's *Christ Bearing the Cross, Death on a Pale Horse,* and *Christ Rejected* as well as a copy after David's *Napoleon Crossing the Alps*.[80] However Rembrandt also advertised popular spectacles during the years he was involved with the Baltimore Museum: the appearance of an African Lion (1815); frequent

[77] Rembrandt Peale opened the Baltimore Museum in 1814, and closed the Apollodorian Gallery in 1815, removing its collection to the Fine Arts Gallery within the Baltimore Museum.
[78] *Rendezvous for Taste: Peale's Baltimore Museum 1814-1830* (Baltimore, MD: The Municipal Museum of the City of Baltimore, 1956) 9.
[79] *Capuchin Chapel* was a major feature on the single-exhibition picture circuit; I describe it in greater depth and consider its significance during that section of this chapter.
[80] King exhibited all of the Dunlap paintings, and twice exhibited Sully's *Capuchin Chapel.*

evening illumination of the galleries with gas lighting; performances by Sena Sama, "The Indian Juggler" (1818), and by Signor Hellene, who played five instruments at once![81]

When Rubens replaced his brother Rembrandt as director of the Baltimore Peale Museum in 1822, he was already an experienced museum proprietor, though his career path was very different from Rembrandt's. Rubens' poor eyesight and interest in botany disinclined him to painting; instead, he helped his father with his museum exhibitions from an early age. He accompanied Rembrandt to London in 1802, where he exhibited the newly unearthed mastodon skeleton while Rembrandt studied at the Royal Academy.[82] When the elder Peale retired to the family farm, Belfield, in 1810, he left Rubens to manage the Philadelphia museum. Rubens' many years running the Philadelphia Peale Museum prepared him to replace Rembrandt as director of the Baltimore Peale Museum, and then for his move in 1825 to New York to open Peale's Museum and Gallery of Fine Arts where he again followed the formula of combining two discrete collections – one of fine arts, the other of natural curiosities – within one exhibition venue.

Rubens continued Rembrandt's separation of the collection between fine arts and natural curiosities, which was a departure for him from the approach of the Philadelphia Museum, where paintings were integrated into the overall display. He also initiated an annual exhibition similar in concept to that put on by the different American academies. Unfortunately the earliest catalogue that survives is for the 1825 exhibition: *Catalogue of the Fourth Annual Exhibition in Peale's Baltimore Museum, of the Works of American Artists, including Sculpture, Painting, Architecture, Drawing, Engraving, &c. Likewise a*

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[81] *Mermaids, Mummies, and Mastodons: The Emergence of the American Museum* (Washington D.C.: American Association of Museums, 1992) 51-57.

[82] Lillian B. Miller, *The Peale Family: Creation of a Legacy* (New York: Abbeville Press in association with the Trust for Museum Exhibitions and the National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, 1996) 36-37.

Selection from the Various Cabinets of Old Masters in this City and its Vicinity.[83] Though Rubens departed for New York before the exhibition opened, he very likely participated in compiling the checklist. The catalogue's title emphasizes the importance of American artists' contributions to the exhibition, but it also admits to the common practice of including Old Master works from private collections. Of over 150 paintings, only four came directly from artists' studios. The four paintings still owned by artists were: a *Landscape, first attempt, by a boy 13 years of age,* J. Comegys; *Portrait of a Gentleman* and *Portrait of a Lady* by T. F. Noone; and two sketches for sale by J.C. Darley, both titled *Landscape – Indian Scenery.* The rest came to the exhibition from private collectors (136) or from the museum's collection (15).[84] The Peales then, cultivated patrons and not artists in their work with the museum. The title of the exhibition catalogue, which emphasizes the American contribution, is also at least somewhat misleading. The catalogue attributes 54 of the paintings to American artists, and 20 of those to members of the Peale family. Although the catalogue only identifies twenty-eight paintings by European masters, another seventy-six paintings have no artist attribution. Some of these likely were by Americans, but many others were either original European paintings or copies (for instance #155, *Head of a Philosopher reading by candle light* and #124, *Hermit and Traveller*). Of the European artists listed, Northern-European predominated, followed by British and then Italian and French artists. David Teniers' name appears four times, once in connection with an acknowledged copy. Works by other Dutch or Flemish artists included well-known names such as Sir Anthony Van Dyck, Frans Hals, Adrien van Ostade, Jan Steen, a member of the Van de Velde

[83] Reproduced in Lillian B. Miller, ed., *The Collected Papers of Charles Willson Peale and His Family,* Microfiche Edition (Millwood, NY: Kraus Thomson Inc., 1980) XI B1.

[84] Two paintings attributed to John Hesselius (*Diana and Her Nymphs, Virgin and Child)* had remained in the artist's family and were loaned by Mrs. Hesselius, who also loaned a portrait, *Mrs. Mary Hesselius* by Wertmuller. Other than those, no paintings came to the exhibition even from the family of an artist.

family and Frans van Mieris. Two other artists' names were suggestive of Northern European origin but their identities were elusive: Van Pol and Van Tol. The only Italian artists listed were Guido Reni, Canaletto, and Guercino (copy after). The Baltimore Museum's 1825 exhibition provides additional evidence for the important role that old master paintings continued to play in nineteenth-century American culture, much as the same emphasis on old masters can be seen in other institutions' annual exhibitions.

Earle and Sully's Gallery

Charles Bird King's friend and colleague Thomas Sully was a partner in the longest-running venue devoted exclusively to the visual arts, next to King's. Earle and Sully's Gallery, established by James S. Earle and Thomas Sully in April 1819, synthesized the for-profit picture gallery format with a commercial art gallery that offered paintings for sale. Sully was a British-trained portraitist. He studied and lived with King when both were in London, and after Gilbert Stuart's death in 1828 many considered him to be the preeminent American portraitist. Earle's partnership with Thomas Sully was both symbiotic and at least moderately successful for decades. The fact that the artist and the framer had a preexisting relationship, and that Earle functioned as a distributor of Sully's work, likely influenced their decision to go into business together, as well as contributed to their long-term success as a partnership.

Sully left behind an extensive record of his partnership with Earle in a journal that he began prior to his first trip to England and continued through the end of 1846. From the journal, we know that the Gallery opened in 1819 and that it remained open under the

same ownership agreement at least into 1847.[85] In his end-of-year notations for 1846, Sully wrote:

> The gallery concerns with Earle remains on the same footing as formerly, that is, a verbal agreement to exhibit our pictures in the Gallery and divide profit and expenses.[86]

When Earle and Sully first negotiated their arrangement, they stood on equal footing in the property of the Gallery. Sully wrote at the beginning of 1820:

> My present Property in Earle & Sully's Gallery is one half the right of the House; ditto of the Carpet; one half of the Pictures purchased of Shaw – viz.: one small landscape called morning; one of Smugglers by Moon-light; and one, a copy from Gasper Poussin which are valued at 700. Magdalene, copied by Rider to whom I advanced Cobalt Blue that cost me $13, & I retouched the whole picture which labour I value at half the work. (January 1, 1820) [87]

The upfront capital expenses, though Sully never provides them in real terms, could not have been insignificant; however, the Gallery was at Earle's place of business and future expenses were lower as a result. There was no rental fee for the space, and presumably Earle and his assistants were available to admit visitors without incurring additional labor costs. It is clear from other entries in his journal that while Sully consulted with Earle and they together entered into contracts with other artists interested in exhibiting in the space, Earle had day-to-day management of the Gallery and oversaw its operations. At the end of 1826, Sully commented in his journal that Earle "has appropriated his front room to [the exhibition of the *Capuchin Chapel*]… which will be at our joint expense."

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[85] In July 1819 Sully noted that "Mr. Arrot. Port. delivered to Mr. Earle…payment in part of my share of the Gallery erected on his lot, the agreement of partnership in the concern to last not less than 3 years from last April." Thomas Sully, "Journal," 23.

[86] Notation appears under the heading "Review of Concerns for the Year 1846," after December 31 of that year. This is Sully's last comment about the Gallery, but only because the *Journal* ends with 1846. The same comment about Sully and Earle's agreement appears in each preceding year as well. It is likely that Sully maintained his relationship with Earle through the end of his career.

[87] Sully, "Journal," 23.

This reference to the "front room" as Earle's distances Sully from responsibility for the operation of the Gallery that he lent his name and in which he was a full partner.

This was not Sully's first experience with a gallery of paintings. In 1817 Sully had opened his own "Exhibition Room" in Philadelphia in Philosophical Hall. At the end of that year, he noted in his journal: "The clear profits of my Exhibition room has been $92."[88] Clear profits likely refers to Sully's net, after deducting the costs of rent as well as costs involved in setting up the space and marketing the exhibition. On March 19, 1818, Sully notes that he closed his exhibition, finding that "the average receipts scarcely pay the current expenses."[89] According to Sully's journal, the artist derived only minimal financial support from his business relationship with Earle; he and Earle regularly settled their accounts with one another, and over the three decades the journal covers none of the transactions between the two men exceeded thirty dollars.[90] However, the lower overhead in Earle and Sully's Gallery relative to Sully's venture on his own was the difference between at least nominal success and failure.

Earle and Sully's Gallery provided benefits to the artist and framer that extended beyond the quantifiable income visitors' admissions fees brought in. Both proprietors benefited from the exposure the Gallery provided. Although Sully refers to the Gallery as "Earle's" throughout his journal, newspaper articles and advertisements consistently

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[88] Ibid., 21.

[89] Idem.

[90] The $30 payment appears on November 2, 1834 (typescript, 101). Sully does not always record the amount he received from Earle in settling the Gallery's accounts, and it is possible that the Gallery receipts far outweighed the amounts Sully lists, in part because Sully also acquired frames from Earle, and it appears that when settling their accounts all of the transactions between the men were mixed. However, the minor amounts involved in the transactions Sully mentions even at a significant increase would not be significant. For instance, July 21, 1833 Sully "Settled the receipts of Gallery exhibitions from Jan 1st & shared $39.75 which I paid over to Earle on accts. of balance due him." Typescript, p. 94. This is a negligible take for six months of activity, as Sully's decision to put the amount towards his obligations to Earle, probably for the purchase of frames.

associated him with the endeavor by referring to it as "Earle and Sully's Gallery."[91] It also provided Sully with an outlet for paintings he produced without a commission, much as Rembrandt Peale's Appollodorian Gallery had done and Charles Bird King's Gallery also would do. Sully displayed his full-length portrait of *Queen Victoria* at the Gallery before he sent it on a tour of other East Coast cities. He put on view there copies he produced after Rubens, Raphael (*Holy Family*), Granet (*Capuchin Chapel*), and Carracci (*Magdalene*). Earle sold Sully's copy of Carracci's *Magdalene* out of the Gallery in 1839 for $250, one instance where Sully used the Gallery both as a repository for uncommissioned work and as a vehicle for its sale.[92] In 1843 Sully sent Earle his most ambitious speculative painting, the 11 by 7 foot *Washington at the Battle of Trenton*, for display. With no commissioned work at hand in 1841, Sully determined to return to the Battle of Trenton as a theme (he had portrayed another element of the battle in his 1819 *Passage of the Delaware*). Though Sully had to absorb the cost of the materials, he was able to convert idle time into profitable hours based on the expectation of an audience for the finished work.

Sully and Earle ventured into the commercial realm by commissioning at least two lesser-known artists to copy famous paintings for resale, frequently for a foreign market. At the end of 1825, Sully and Earle contracted with the painter John Clarendon Darley to copy masterworks, which they would then sell. Only two paintings appear to have come out of this relationship, both of which were copies of copies: Sully's Ma*donna della Sedia* after Raphael, which he had made while studying in London, and his *Capuchin Chapel* after Francois Marius Granet. These were sent to Joel R. Poinsett, the

[91] For instance, the advertisement that ran in *Poulson's American Daily Advertiser* in January 1820 for Sully's "Passage of the Delaware in 1776," which stated that the painting would be exhibited "for a few weeks only, at Earle and Sully's Gallery…." "Passage of the Delaware in 1776," *Poulson's American Daily Advertiser* (January 26, 1820).
[92] Sully, "Journal," 204.

American Minister to Mexico, who sold them there. The partners paid Darley a total of $210 for the pair of paintings, and received on December 26, 1826 $500 from Poinsett, representing the value of the paintings and frames after the latter deducted his expenses.[93] The venture thus brought in a total of $290 but required a year to execute. Further work for Darley does not appear in Sully's Journal; perhaps his fee was too high to justify the effort involved. Despite this false start, in 1827 Sully and Earle entered into a similar arrangement with the artist's twenty-year-old daughter Jane Sully. In January of 1827, Sully commented that "Mr. Earle paid Jane $45 in full of her account against us for copying pictures, that I am to finish for our mutual benefit."[94] Later that year, he wrote that Jane had since copied for Earle and Sully Raphael's *Holy Family*, for which she was paid fifteen dollars. Following the same premise as in their venture with Darley, Earle and Sully sent the finished, framed painting to South America for sale.[95] Jane commanded significantly less for her work than did her father, who valued his copy of Raphael's *Holy Family* at $116, including the frame.[96] Sully and Earle also paid her far less than they did Darley. Thomas Sully may have taken advantage of the fact that Jane was his daughter and her studio was in his home, or perhaps she commanded a lower fee simply because she was a woman.[97]

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[93] Ibid., 44

[94] Ibid., 47.

[95] Ibid., 52. By no means were all of the paintings Jane Sully copied sent out of the United States. On October 19, 1828, Sully comments that "Last Monday sent Jane's copy of Westall's Girl at the Well to Earle's for Dr. Tidyman, who paid $15 the which I handed to her." (typescript, 63) On Wednesday, April 12, 1830 Sully sent Jane's "Copy from Lawrence" to the Gallery (typescript, 75). On July 7th, he sent her Rebecca to the Gallery for sale, $25 framed (typescript, 76). In June 1833, Sully records that a Mr. Sicard paid Jane $100, the balance due on a copy she had painted for him. Earlier in the year, Sully described Jane as painting landscapes for Sicard, so it is unclear whether the $100 was due for a single painting or for multiple works.

[96] Ibid., 71.

[97] He notes on January 1, 1827 that he "Had my, and Jane's, painting room chimney swept." Ibid., 46.

Earle & Sully's Gallery had at a minimum two rooms. As we have seen, Earle at least periodically committed the front room to special exhibitions, as in the case of *Capuchin Chapel*. Unfortunately, aside from Sully's 1820 comment that he was an equal partner in owning carpet for the Gallery, we have no other knowledge of the look or layout of the space. We know rather more about objects displayed there. At the end of 1823 Sully listed a number of "Pictures in the Gallery belonging to me":

> Portrait of Washington by Stuart, purchased from Craig; Landscapes – 'The Obelisk' – View on North River, Jones; Gate of Calais – Girard's Atala – Portrait of Jefferson; Whole lengths of Jefferson, Decatur and Washington; Portraits by Mignard; copy from Reynolds McCrea; Portrait of J. Vaughan; Flower piece; Portrait of King; Passage of Delaware, original study; Corregio [*sic*]; Portrait of Cook; Sketch from Turner; Copy from Hilton; Dogs; Pyramus and Thisbe; Resurrection of Christ; Moses and the Tables; Portrait of Rhinott & a Head of Christ by Guido, left in trust.[98]

These paintings joined the paintings Sully described in 1820 as having been "purchased of Shaw," as well as prints valued by Sully at $960 in January of 1822.[99] Sully in 1823, then, counted twenty-eight paintings in Earle and Sully's Gallery to be his own. He said nothing about what else might have hung in the Gallery at the time, but it would appear that the exhibition was relatively small, relative to annual exhibitions and to the over 200 paintings Charles Bird King had on display when he opened his Gallery in 1824.

Sully refers repeatedly in the journal to sending works to Earle to be framed or to be packed and either shipped or "sent home." Because Sully used the Gallery as a temporary home for commissioned paintings after their completion, the Gallery's holdings changed constantly. A survey of Sully's notations for 1827, a particularly active year, highlights the many different ways Sully interacted with the Gallery:

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[98] List appears at the end of 1823, under the title "State of Affairs at the Close of the Year 1823." In January of 1822, he refers to the portrait of King as "Charles King's portrait in small, $50". Ibid., 29.
[99] For Shaw reference, see page 66 above. Ibid., 25.

> Jan 7 – The small copy of Magdalene is added to my list of pictures in the Gallery….
>
> Mch 20 – Sent to the Gallery at Earle's the picture for Stevens steamboat.
>
> Apr 3 – Sent home to Earle the copy of Ariadne.
>
> May 12 – Sent the copy of the Holy Family to Gallery (This and the Ariadne are the joint property with their frames of Earle and myself).
>
> June 26 – Lent Mr. Earle the portrait of Miss Kingston – my study of a Mother and Child and the copy of Rubens for the Gallery.
>
> Aug 21 – Gave H. Powel's agent an order for the removal of the picture of Mr. Carroll to the Gallery.
>
> Sept 22 – Mr. Earle took the picture of the 'Shipwrecked Sailor Boy' to the Gallery.
>
> Dec 2 – Sent to the Gallery the original sketch of Carroll, Jane's Shipwrecked Sailor – and the portrait of Mrs. Pinckney which Earle shipped to Charleston.

This inventory provides numerous insights into the value of the Gallery for Sully, as well as into the fluidity of his relationship with it and with Earle. Though Sully did not produce specifically for display anywhere near the number of paintings King generated for his Gallery of Paintings, he did frequently note, as here, sending paintings to be placed on view.[100] Finally, he often left commissioned portraits such as that of Mr. Carroll and Miss Kingston at the Gallery before delivering them on to their owners.[101]

The Sully & Earle Gallery also served as a venue for single-picture exhibitions. This perhaps is not surprising considering Sully himself participated in the circuit by sending out *Queen Victoria* as well as his copy of *Capuchin Chapel*. On December 1,

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[100] Based on the evidence of the journal. Sully repeatedly refers the reader to a "Memorandum Book" for specific information about his property in the Gallery, including a list of paintings. Unfortunately the location of that document is unknown.

[101] In another example, Sully noted for May 20, 1822: "Closed the exhibition of Jefferson which has yielded about $30 to the concern, and sent the portrait and frame to West Point."

1824 Sully recorded the agreement he and Earle reached with William Dunlap to exhibit Dunlap's *Christ Bearing the Cross*:

> Either $10 per week for the room and attendance – or we shall incur one third of the expenses, of freight, advertisement, sigh, &c., &c., and receive one third of the receipts. The period of exhibition may commence any time between this and March and may last from two weeks to two months. – It is understood that no charge is to be made for room and attendance – that is put against Mr. D. picture.

Earlier in 1824, the Gallery had staged an exhibition of a group of tapestries made by Thomas Cooper, which Sully described as four large pictures, twenty-three chair covers, and twenty-four "elbow pieces."[102] Rembrandt Peale also held an exhibition of paintings at the Gallery in 1831.[103] These exhibitions supplemented Sully's loans of his own work for display. All of the strategies Sully and Earle embraced to promote and to render their Gallery financially viable demonstrate the fluidity of the gallery concept throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, as well as the difficulties any proprietor faced in posting a profit. Earle and Sully succeeded, but their success required hard labor.

Other Venues

A number of other artists mounted displays associated with their studios, beginning in the 1820s. These included James Lambdin in Pittsburgh and then in Louisville, Kentucky; Chester Harding in Washington, D.C. and then in Boston; George Cooke in New Orleans and then Prattsville, Alabama; and Ralph E. W. Earle in

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[102] Sully, "Journal," 31. An "elbow piece" referred to the coverings for a chair's arms.

[103] Sully did not record any details regarding the contents of the exhibition, but it is likely that it consisted of copies of old masters. In October 1831, Rembrandt Peale opened an exhibition in New York of twenty-seven paintings, primarily "splendid copies of the great Italian masters of painting," according to an editorial in the *New-York Spectator.* The article lists the original artists and subjects of many of the works, including: Raphael's "Madonna of the low chair," Allori's "Judith with the head of Holofernes," "A holy family" by Rubens, "The Cumaean Sybil" by Dominichino, Guido's "Cleopatra," Titian's "Flora," Correggio's "Danae," and a landscape by Salvator Rosa. The exhibit also included a copy of a self-portrait of Sir Joshua Reynolds. Peale also contributed original works, primarily portraits (including his portrait of George Washington) and at least one landscape. "Peale's Copies of the Great Masters," *New-York Spectator* (Friday, October 7, 1831).

Nashville. All of these artists shared two significant traits: they were itinerants over a significant portion of their career and their primary profession was as a portraitist. Their galleries differed greatly from one another, however. Lambdin's incorporated natural curiosities, Harding's was in part a commercial gallery where he sold other artists' work, George Cooke envisioned his gallery as an outlet for his original history paintings and dramatic European landscape scenes, and Ralph Earle capitalized on his close friendship with Andrew Jackson to anchor a collection of Tennessee worthies.

In her 1829 travelogue *Mrs. Royall's Pennsylvania*, Mrs. Anne Royall visited Pittsburgh and took extensive note of Lambdin's Museum and Gallery of Paintings there.[104] Born in Pittsburgh, James Lambdin (1807-1889) trained in Philadelphia first with the miniaturist Edward Miles and then with Thomas Sully, with whom William Dunlap says Lambdin studied for a year before returning home to Pittsburgh in 1826.[105] Lambdin opened his Pittsburgh Gallery, "the first public exhibition of the works of art in the West" according to Dunlap, on September 8, 1828, and maintained it there for four years before relocating it to Louisville, Kentucky. At the time of Dunlap's writing, Lambdin was still exhibiting his collection, which Dunlap stated was "rapidly augmenting," in Louisville.[106]

Lambdin was unusual as an artist-proprietor for including works by other American painters in his collection. Royall noted that Lambdin exhibited

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[104] Mrs. Anne Royall, *Mrs. Royall's Pennsylvania, or Travels Continued in the United States* (Washington: Printed for the Author, 1829) 2 Vols.

[105] Lambdin returned to Philadelphia permanently in 1837, and served as director of the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts from 1845-1864. Ruth Irwin Weidner, *The Lambdins of Philadelphia Newly Discovered Works* (Philadelphia: Schwarz Gallery, 2002) 5. Weidner cites an unpublished paper by Elizabeth Kennedy Sargent, "Lambdin's Pittsburgh Museum of Natural History and Gallery of the Fine Arts, 1828-1832" (tutorial research paper, Chatham College).

[106] William Dunlap, *History of the Rise and Progress of the Arts of Design in the United States* (New York: Benjamin Blom, 1965 [1823]) Vol. III, 251-252.

> paintings from ancient as well as modern masters. Fine landscapes, by Doughty, Birch, Lawrence, &c. Pictures from the collection of Baron Basse Muller. Portraits of distinguished characters, by Stewart, Sully, Peale, and Lambdin.[107]

Of the painters Royall mentioned, only Lawrence, who was British, was not an American. The artist-proprietors I have considered thus far overwhelmingly relied on their own work (including their copies of other artists' paintings) for their permanent collections and only rarely displayed other American artists' paintings, most frequently in temporary exhibitions. However, in some ways Lambdin also conformed to the formula of other contemporary visual arts venues. His Gallery of Paintings was a single-picture exhibition venue; advertisements record that Lambdin displayed three of William Dunlap's paintings: *Bearing of the Cross, Christ Rejected,* and *Cavalry*.[108] He also complemented his Gallery of Paintings with an extensive museum of natural curiosities. Royall recorded that Lambdin exhibited

> about two hundred foreign birds…; twenty quadrupeds; five hundred minerals; three hundred fossils, amongst which are many bones of the Mammoth; three hundred marine shells; twelve hundred impressions of medals; one hundred ancient coins; a handsome collection of articles from the South seas; marine productions; Indian articles, &c. &c.

She then observed that Mr. Lambdin's establishment was the "only specimen of taste or amusement in the city;" there was no theatre, library, athenaeum, or gardens. Lambdin was not immune to the more spectacle-based exhibitions either. He periodically displayed curiosities such as "artificial fireworks" and a "phantasmagoria."[109] Lambdin may not have had competition from other entertainment venues, but what success he

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[107] Royall, *Mrs. Royall's Pennsylvania,* Vol. II, 64-65.

[108] In an advertisement in the *Pittsburgh Gazette* (September 24, 1830), Lambdin described Dunlap's *Cavalry* as "painted on upwards of 250 square feet of canvas, and contains more than 100 figures, large as life." In 1832, Lambdin exhibited a painting of "Cain meditating the death of his Brother Abel, by David." *Pittsburgh Gazette* (May 15, 1832).

[109] *Pittsburgh Gazette* (September 2, 1831; November 8, 1831).

enjoyed was hard-won. He later described the Pittsburgh and Louisville museum enterprises as "years of trouble, vexation, and pecuniary loss."[110]

Lambdin knew Charles Willson Peale's Philadelphia Museum from his student days and attempted to emulate the principles that governed it. A contemporary essay by Dr. Jacob Green that appeared in the *Journal of the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy* provides evidence of Lambdin's sincere commitment to the pursuit of knowledge through his collection of curiosities. Green, in researching "Some Chemical Arts known to the Aborigines of North America," visited Lambdin's Museum in Pittsburgh, where he discovered glass beads Lambdin had excavated from an American Indian burial site "near the banks of the Ohio." Green writes that "[Lambdin] showed me some of the crumbling bones of the skeleton which they probably once decorated, and a number of stone axes, arrow heads, pipes, and fragments of earthenware, taken from the same tumulus."[111] When Green expressed interest in the beads and questioned their origin (whether ancient or modern European), Lambdin provided him with several samples that he was willing to have destroyed in testing. Lambdin in this way established his own sincerity in scientific inquiry, both through his own efforts in procuring the artifacts and in his willingness to part with them for the purposes of experimentation. Lambdin could not compete in scale or variety with the Peale Philadelphia Museum, but the way Royall privileged birds (over 200) and mammoth bones over other curiosities mirrors their status within Peale's collection. Royall furthermore described Lambdin's museum as having displays "in neater and better order than any Museum I have met with. The shelves are white, neat, and so regular that they are a show of themselves; and the whole enclosed with glass."[112]

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[110] "Journal of J. R. Lambdin," pt. 2, 18.
[111] Jacob Green, M.D., "On some Chemical Arts known to the Aborigines of North America," *Journal of the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy* V, 2 (July 1833) 96.
[112] Royall, *Mrs. Royall's Pennsylvania,* Vol. II, 65.

This description is reminiscent of Peale's Long Gallery, where he displayed his many bird specimens. Royall goes on to note that she found "flowers of all sorts, pinks, roses, &c. &c. made out of sea shells, the most extraordinary piece of labor and ingenuity." These according to Royall were the work of Mrs. Peale of Philadelphia; whether accurate or not, it was a connection between Charles Willson Peale and the young Lambdin.[113]

Lambdin also looked to Thomas Sully's exhibition strategies, which combined the display of his own work with that of his old master copies. While Royall does not give titles for any of the paintings in the Pennsylvania Museum's collection, a catalogue from Lambdin's second museum venture, the "First Annual Exhibition at the Louisville Museum, and Gallery of Fine Arts," has survived. The catalogue lists the following paintings:

> Portrait of Professor Dudley of Transylvania University; Portrait of Chief Justice Marshall; Portrait of Hon. H. Clay; Portrait of Dr. S.L. Mitchell, of New York; Portrait of Hon. Wm. Wilkins, U.S.L.; Portrait of Geo. Catlin, (Artist and Traveller, in the costume of a Sioux Warrior); Portrait of Professor Caldwell; Fancy Portrait; Portrait of Professor Cooke of Transylvania; Portrait of Miss P.; Portrait (Full Length) of a Little Girl; Portrait of Miss Land, a sketch; Holy Family – after Raffaelle; Portrait of Dr. Rush, Copy from Sully; Old Lady, An – Study; The Interior of a Nunnery – with the Ceremony of a Young Lady Preparing to Take the Veil; from a Design of Granet.[114]

It also mentions that "the Manager has engaged, at much cost, the collection of Pictures by the Old Masters, in the possession of Thomas Hilson, Esq., Comedian; many of which are of great rarity." Lambdin diversified his fine arts collection through the addition of

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[113] Mrs. Peale would have been married to one of Charles Willson Peale's sons, but there is no mention in the literature that any of his sons married a woman who produced seashell flowers. If the reference is inaccurate, either Lambdin or Royall was mistaken. Either way, the elusive Mrs. Peale connected Lambdin with Peale's Philadelphia Museum by name.

[114] *Catalogue of the First Annual Exhibition at the Louisville Museum, and Gallery of the Fine Arts. May, 1834* (Louisville: Settle & Johnston, Printers, Main Street, 1834). I have been unable to locate the catalogue itself. All of the referenced information can be found in the Smithsonian American Art Museum Pre-1877 Art Exhibition Catalogue Index (http://siris-artexhibition.si.edu/ipac20/ipac.jsp?profile=aeciall).

Hilson's paintings. Even with this augmentation though, the Louisville Museum and Gallery of Fine Arts as its name indicates, remained divided between the fine arts and natural curiosities.

Chester Harding (1792-1866) varied the artist-proprietor gallery format by providing services as an art dealer, though he came to that approach gradually. Harding was born in Western Massachusetts, the fourth of twelve children. He educated himself informally and tried out new professions as opportunities presented themselves. Perhaps this background put him at an advantage when he turned to portrait painting in 1817, after observing the work of an itinerant artist passing through Pittsburgh. Harding taught himself how to paint and gained proficiency in the relatively unsophisticated market of rural Kentucky, punctuated by a two-month sojourn in Philadelphia at the end of 1819, where he drew at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. By late 1821, ready to test his talents in a more refined market, Harding traveled to Washington, D.C. and then to Boston. Though he received many commissions in both cities, Harding determined to pursue his studies in England and embarked in August 1823 on the first of two journeys to Europe.[115]

Harding appears not to have aspired to paint anything other than portraits.[116] During his time in London Harding, like other American artists, visited galleries and private collections to see contemporary and old master paintings and sculpture, which certainly exposed him to every category of painting. However, in the journal that he kept while in England, he only referred to one history painting – Benjamin West's *Death on a*

[115] Harding made his second trip to Europe in 1846.

[116] Based on the evidence of Harding's autobiography, *My Egotistigraphy*, On his trip to England in 1823, Harding relates many visits to collections, but the only painting he records are portraits. He sent four portraits to the Royal Academy exhibition in March, 1824. Chester Harding, *My Egotistigraphy*, (Cambridge, MA: J. Wilson, 1866) 76-77.

Pale Horse.[117] Based on the evidence of the journal, he never copied a history painting during his years abroad, but rather kept himself busy completing numerous portrait commissions. Considering his different approach to his years of study in England from that of his contemporaries, it is perhaps unsurprising that Harding's American gallery never became an outlet for uncommissioned works. This put his venture financially at odds from those of the many American artists such as Sully, King, Rembrandt Peale, and George Cooke who hoped to defray the cost of producing such works (history and genre paintings primarily) through their for-profit displays.

Harding's early gallery forays are difficult to reconstruct and in fact we do not know when he first opened a gallery to the public. Never in the course of an autobiography composed late in life does he mention his gallery or any of the exhibitions he mounted. However, in 1828 the landscapist Henry C. Pratt wrote to fellow painter Samuel F. B. Morse that a group calling itself the New England Association of Artists planned to exhibit at Chester Harding's Gallery.[118] During a sojourn in Washington, D.C. in 1830, Harding charged admission to an exhibit not only of his own portraits but also of George Cooke's large *Interior of St. Peter's Church at Rome* and *Conspiracy of Cataline*.[119] In April of the next year, Harding advertised in Boston an "Exhibition of Portraits," including the likenesses of Daniel Webster, Charles Carroll, President Monroe, and Judges Marshall and Story at the cost of twenty-five cents for the season's

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[117] Ibid., 52.

[118] It is unclear whether the exhibition ever took place. No advertisement for the show has survived. Henry C. Pratt to Samuel F. B. Morse, Boston, April 13, 1828; unpublished MSS in the Library of Congress. Cited by Jean Gordon, *The Fine Arts in Boston 1815 to 1879* (Ph.D, Dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1965) 17.

[119] An author who identified him or herself as "Columbus" noted that "Conspiracy of Catiline" [sic] was on view "without extra charge." "Mr. Cook's Paintings," *National Intelligencer* (April 12, 1830).

admission.[120] In May of 1833, Harding opened a show dramatic in scale and content that ushered in over a decade of ambitious exhibitions that would help to define the Boston arts scene.[121] An advertisement in the *Boston Courier* promoted

> A LARGE painting by G. Cooke, from the original by Gericault, of the WRECK OF THE FRENCH FRIGATE MEDUSA, together with an original of St. Peter's Church at Rome; the Transfiguration [after Raphael], and several other valuable copies from the old masters.[122]

Cooke's *Wreck of the Medusa* alone was described as over four-hundred square feet in size, which would have made it larger than the original painting, which was approximately 16 x 23 ½, or 377 square feet. The other paintings mentioned were by Cooke as well (*Interior of St. Peter's* was an original composition), a convenient efficiency for Harding in shipping and in dealing with a single artist. Harding charged the standard twenty-five-cent admission and declared the Gallery open daily from eight o'clock in the morning until sunset.

Harding moved beyond the organizing structure of the single-picture exhibition to bring in entire collections. Frequently, he offered them for sale. In this, Harding acted as a commercial art dealer. According to Henry Pratt, Harding shared profits from the exhibitions with the exhibiting artists, as much as half of the daily receipts on certain days; works unsold at the end of the exhibition were sold at auction and the proceeds divided.[123] Harding's Gallery furthermore functioned as a type of American academy

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[120] "Mr. Harding's Exhibition," *Boston Courier* (April 28, 1831). Twenty-five cents' admission for the season was extremely low for the time period; the standard for all types of collections was twenty-five cents/visit, frequently with an option to pay one dollar for the season.

[121] Scholar Leah Lipton believes this exhibition formally opened "Harding's Gallery," though she gives no supporting evidence for this theory. It is possible that this is the first time Harding advertised his gallery as such, but as we have seen, Harding had exhibited paintings in a venue of some sort since the late 1820s. Leah Lipton, *A Truthful Likeness: Chester Harding and His Portraits* (Washington, D.C.: National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, 1985) 33.

[122] The advertisement lists May 9 as the first day the ad ran in the paper. *Boston Courier* (May 23, 1833).

[123] Paraphrased by Jean Gordon from a letter from Henry C. Pratt to Samuel F. B. Morse, April 1, 1835, MSS, Library of Congress. Gordon, *The Fine Arts in Boston*, 17.

inasmuch as in 1842 the fledgling Boston Artists' Association held its first annual exhibition in the space. Though the association was new, Harding had held similar exhibitions as early as 1834, when he mounted an "Artists' Exhibition" that included 169 listed works, most of them by Boston-based artists.[124] Harding exhibited and sold more than just the works of local Boston artists. In 1841, a catalogue records the exhibition and auction of "Nearly 200 Splendid Modern European paintings by the most distinguished European living Artists."[125] It is important to note, however, that even Harding succumbed to the temptation to display scientific spectacles. In 1844, he displayed Samuel F. B. Morse's "Magnetic Telegraph," which the Boston Courier declared "decidedly the greatest wonder of the present age."[126] Morse's status within the artistic community – as a painter and the first president of the National Academy of Design – likely explains the crossover with Harding's Gallery. However, the display was clearly a spectacle unconnected, other than tangentially through Morse, to the fine arts.

As is so frequently the case with these enterprises, Harding's Gallery's finances cannot be recovered and it is impossible to gauge the extent to which it supplemented his income as a portraitist. However, the type of gallery Harding ran was entirely consistent with his character. It provided a service to local artists and was a practical economic venture. In 1867, Henry Tuckerman declared Harding to have been "unaffected, kindly, simple, frank, and social;" Tuckerman believed these "personal qualities greatly

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[124] Leah Lipton, "The Boston Artists' Association, 1841-1851," *American Art Journal* XV, 4 (Autumn, 1983) 47.

[125] Cited as an exhibition catalogue in the collection of the Boston Athenaeum by Lipton, *A Truthful Likeness*, 34.

[126] The exhibition of the telegraph came at the height of enthusiasm for the new technology, which Morse had demonstrated successfully on May 24, 1844 by telegraphing "What God hath wrought!" from the Supreme Court chamber in Washington, D.C. to the B&O Railroad Depot in Baltimore, MD. Edward Lind Morse, *Samuel F. B. Morse: His Letters and Journals* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company & The Riverside Press, 1914) II, 222. The *New-Orleans Commercial Bulletin* November 8, 1844 reprinted a column about the telegraph and its display at Harding's gallery from the *Boston Courier*. It is unknown on what date the piece appeared in the *Courier*.

promoted his artistic success."[127] This assessment of Harding is reminiscent of Tuckerman's biography of King, of whose career he wrote that although his paintings were "not remarkable for artistic superiority," nonetheless "his amiable and exemplary character won him many friends."[128] Harding's support of local artists proved beneficial to him both for the income he received from exhibitions and sales and for the way it positioned him at the center of artistic life in Boston. For instance, in 1839 an exhibition of forty-five of Washington Allston's paintings was held at the Gallery to benefit that artist as he continued to work on his monumental opus, *Belshazzar's Feast*.[129] Since Allston was as closely associated with Boston as Copley or Stuart, Bostonians considered Harding's exhibition to be of benefit to a Boston institution. And after the Boston Artists' Association formed in 1841, they exhibited annually at Harding's Gallery.[130] Through his Gallery, Harding rendered himself indispensible to the arts in Boston, and managed to do so while maintaining a viable enterprise. Harding was more successful than most gallery proprietors of the period, though like the others his success required constant hard work and maintenance that undoubtedly took time away from painting.

George Cooke (1793-1849) ties together many of the strains evident in other artists and galleries of the antebellum period. Cooke, who was a student of Charles Bird King in the 1820s when King had just opened his own Gallery, opened the National Gallery of Painting in New Orleans in December 1844. The Gallery was similar in concept to King's. Cooke, like King, was a portraitist by profession but aspired to (and

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[127] Tuckerman, *Book of the Artists*, 64.
[128] Ibid., 68.
[129] Harding notes in his autobiography that he loaned Allston the use of his Boston studio in 1828 while he traveled to Washington, D.C., hoping that Allston would be able to finish *Belshazzar's Feast*. Harding, *My Egotistigraphy*, 139. Lipton records the Allston exhibition, which she records as referenced in the *Boston Daily Evening Transcript,* April 23 and June 24, 1839. Lipton, *A Truthful Likeness,* 36.
[130] The Association paid Harding $175 for the use of his gallery from July to November, 1844. Lipton, "The Boston Artists' Association."

unlike King, actually did) paint more monumental works, traveling extensively in Europe between 1826 and 1831 to complete his training. After his return to the United States, Cooke spent much of his career as an itinerant in search of commissions throughout the South, a lifestyle both difficult but common to highly-trained American artists of his generation. He ultimately placed many of his original compositions and the copies he made after old masters while in Europe in his Gallery, including: *The Landing of Columbus, The Landing of the Maidens at Jamestown, The Maids of Judah by the Rivers of Babylon, Patrick Henry Arguing the Parsons' Cause at Hanover Court House, The Interior of St. Peter's,* and large-scale copies such as Raphael's *Transfiguration* and Gericault's *Wreck of the Medusa*. Cooke prior to opening his own Gallery sent his copy of the *Wreck of the Medusa* out on the American picture circuit; both Harding and King displayed the painting in their Galleries.

Cooke's Gallery was short-lived. He opened it seasonally for four years, through the winter of 1847-1848, but it struggled financially.[131] Aside from exhibiting his own paintings, Cooke attempted to sell the works of other artists, including works by Thomas Cole. In April of 1846, Cooke wrote to Cole that over the season the Gallery had

> only averaged 60$ [sic] per week, just covering expenses…. I shall close on the 1st of May and my insurance having run out I shall not renew but send the paintings home to contributors, and send the best of my own to England.[132]

[131] It is unclear whether the Gallery opened in the winter of 1848-1849. The Cookes were in New Orleans, apparently preparing to move permanently to Athens, Georgia when George Cooke was stricken with Asiatic cholera and died. In 1850, when another artist moved into Cooke's former gallery space, works of art were still there, but it is unknown whether they had been on view prior to Cooke's death. Linda Crocker Simmons, "Chronological Survey: The Life of George Cooke" in Donald D. Keyes, *George Cooke 1793-1849* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia, 1991) 20-21.

[132] George Cooke to Thomas Cole, April 10, 1846. Archives of American Art.

Despite his troubles, Cooke did reopen his Gallery the following two winter seasons. However, as with so many other proprietors, Cooke discovered financial success was difficult if not impossible to achieve with a picture gallery alone.

THE PICTURE CIRCUIT

As we have seen, many picture-gallery proprietors augmented their displays with large-scale paintings, featured as special exhibitions. Particularly during the 1820s and 1830s, many works of art traveled the eastern seaboard as the foci of special exhibitions. Not all such paintings joined existing collections; frequently the paintings formed their own exhibition in a temporary space. Typically, paintings displayed this way were large-scale, dramatic history paintings. These included John Trumbull's massive paintings destined for the Capitol Rotunda, John Vanderlyn's *Marius Among the Ruins of Carthage* and *Ariadne*, William Dunlap's scenes from the Passion of Christ, George Cooke's copy of Théodore Géricault's *Wreck of the Medusa*, Rembrandt Peale's *Court of Death*, and various versions of Francois Granet's *Capuchin Chapel* **(Figures 7, 8, & 9)**. Many of the paintings spent years on the exhibition circuit. Temporary big picture exhibitions benefitted many people. The artists who sent out their works profited not just financially from the exhibition receipts but also from name recognition in the popular press. When galleries hosted such exhibitions, the shows provided the proprietors with the opportunity to refresh what frequently were static collections with the addition of new works, adding an incentive for repeat visits from local patrons. Finally, American audiences benefited from exposure to a range of styles and subjects not readily accessible in most communities otherwise. For instance, Dunlap and Trumbull's styles derived from the British grand manner tradition. Michelangelo influenced Géricault; and Rembrandt Peale, John Vanderlyn, and Granet were all influenced by Neoclassicism.

Charles Bird King did not send his own paintings out on the circuit; he never attempted a monumental-scale composition. However, his Gallery regularly hosted large paintings in temporary exhibitions. The fact that before the 1840s King only advertised his Gallery of Paintings when he had a special exhibition to promote suggests that he considered these paintings to be the draw and that his own collection played a supporting role. Over the years, King advertised Dunlap's *Bearing of the Cross, Cavalry*, and *Venus attired by the Graces* (after Guido Reni); an anonymous painter's *Saul and the Witch of Endor*; Sully's *Capuchin Chapel* (after Granet) and *Queen Victoria*; Auguste Herview's *Landing of Lafayette at Cincinnati*; George Cooke's copy of Géricault's *Wreck of the Medusa*; Charles Robert Leslie's *Sterne and the Chaste Vamper's Wife*; and topographical paintings by Clarkson Stanfield (*Grand Picture of the Lord Mayor of London's Excursion to Richmond*) and David Roberts (*View of the Interior of the Thames Tunnel*).[133] Significantly, the only large-scale painting King displayed of an American subject was Herview's *Landing of Lafayette at Cincinnati.* King's roster of single-picture exhibitions reflects not a similar relative absence of patriotic themes from his collection more generally, but also a dearth of patriotic imagery on the exhibition circuit from the 1820s through the 1830s.

[133] King exhibited these paintings in the following years (paintings and dates followed by citation information): Dunlap's *Bearing of the Cross* (1825; "Now Exhibiting, at King's Gallery of Paintings, Dunlap's Picture of The Bearing of the Cross," *National Intelligencer,* January 29, 1825); Dunlap's *Cavalry* (1829; "Dunlap's Picture of Cavalry," *National Intelligencer,* March 10, 1829); Dunlap's *Venus* (1829; "While Cupid and the Graces, ever young…" *National Intelligencer,* November 13, 1829); *Saul and the Witch of Endor* ("And Saul Said unto the Woman,…" *National Intelligencer,* May 19, 1825); Sully's *Capuchin Chapel* (1825; "Sully's Capuchin Chapel, and Mr. King's Gallery of Paintings," *National Intelligencer,* January 27, 1825 and September 27, 1825; Sully's *Queen Victoria* (1840; "Sully's Full Length Portrait of Queen Victoria," *National Intelligencer,* July 31, 1840); Auguste Herview's *Landing of Lafayette at Cincinnati* (1830; "The Landing of Lafayette," *National Intelligencer,* March 27, 1830); George Cooke's *Wreck of the Medusa* (1835; "Exhibition at King's Gallery," *National Intelligencer,* January 30, 1835); Charles Robert Leslie's *Sterne and the Caste Vamper's Wife* (1834; "Leslie's celebrated Cabinet Picture of Sterne…," *National Intelligencer,* March 10, 1834); Clarckson Stanfield's *Grand Picture of the Lord Mayor of London's Excursion to Richmond* and David Roberts' *View of the Interior of the Thames Tunnel* (1831; "Exhibition of Paintings," *National Intelligencer,* January 10, 1831).

One image in particular was paradigmatic of the popularity of the special exhibition, though it was itself neither particularly large nor epic in subject. François-Marius Granet's *Choir of the Capuchin Church in the Piazza Barberini at Rome*, frequently called *Capuchin Chapel*, was wildly popular both in Europe and in the United States. King exhibited it in his Gallery twice in the 1820s. The subject, which existed in many versions by Granet as well as by other artists, was that of Capuchin Order monks worshipping within a narrow chapel space with an elevated ceiling. Large canvases cover the chapel walls. One window at the back of the church and two windows within the vaulted ceiling dramatically illuminate the space. Granet first exhibited the painting in the summer of 1814 at a salon at the French Embassy in Rome where Caroline Murat, Queen of Naples, and her brother-in-law Louis Bonaparte both wished to acquire it.[134] According to Emmanuel Bénézit's *Dictionnaire*, Granet copied *Capuchin Chapel* at least sixteen times.[135] The purchasers of the variants were frequently prominent people, including the Marquess of Conyngham and the future Charles X. In the sense that the subsequent versions followed the same subject and compositional structure, they were copies. However, Granet varied the sizes of the paintings and individual details within the compositions; each resulting composition was unique. The painting that was exhibited at the Salon of Cambrai in 1826 (now in the collection of the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Lyon), for instance, is unusual in the series for including the detail of a monk who has fallen to his knees in ecstatic prayer. This version received a gold medal at Cambrai, contradicting modernist valuations of originality. Art historian Stephen Bann has written on this subject, and suggests that more than the invention and work of the individual

[134] I have drawn this, and subsequent information about Granet's own copies of the painting, from Stephen Bann, *Parallel Lines: Printmakers, Painters and Photographers in Nineteenth-Century France* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2001) 21-23.

[135] E. Bénézit, *Dictionnaire critique et documentaire des Peintres Sulpteurs Dessinateurs et Graveurs de tous les temps et de tous les pays* (Paris: Grunt, 1999) Vol. 6, 375.

hand, Granet "resourcefully marketed a visual spectacle."[136] As such, the experience of viewing the scene, so long as well executed by the artist, outweighed viewer concern for or even interest in authenticity.

Americans were as enthusiastic as Europeans about Granet's *Capuchin Chapel*.[137] According to one Boston resident

> Instead of going to Church, as I ought, I went this morning to see the PICTURE, which, by the munificence of the proprietor, BENJAMIN WIGGIN, Esq. is now on Exhibition at Scollay's Buildings, for the benefit of the Insane and General Hospital. Criticism is silent, being lost in admiration, as she dwells on the wonders of this exquisite production. Go said our inimitable and immortal STEWART [Gilbert Stuart] – Go, said he, and see the CAPUCHIN CHAPEL: Do not, he added, do not defer your visit: - Go to day – lest you should die before the morrow, without having seen one of the happiest issues of fine taste, impregnated by the best powers of the most vigorous genius. – What, our great artist and the first of judges said to me, I, Sir, would repeat as his humble echo, to the long lists of your subscribers, Go – lose no time – avail yourselves of the earliest opportunity to gratify at once your love of the chaste and charming in art, and to contribute to the funds of a noble charity; of a charity, which, I am grieved and surprised to hear, is languishing for the want of pecuniary assistance. Your's, &c. S. CHRISTMAS DAY, 1819.[138]

The painting went on view in Boston in December 1819, and remained on view through April 5, 1820.[139] According to a short notice that appeared in the *New-England Palladium* at the end of the run, almost 150 people, a large number at that time, visited the exhibition on March 29 alone.[140] The exhibition was such a significant event in Boston that two weeks after the painting was removed, the *Boston Intelligencer* still was

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[136] Bann, *Parallel Lines*, 22.

[137] The name of the painting morphed from *Capuchin Church* to *Capuchin Chapel* over the months the painting was on view. A notice in the *Columbian Centinel* of the imminent departure of the painting refers to the chapel, not the church. "Capuchin Chapel," *Columbian Centinel* (March 25, 1820).

[138] According to an editorial column of the same day, the painting was approximately 7 x 4 feet. The fee was the customary 25 cents. "Exhibition," *Boston Intelligencer & Evening Gazette* (December 25, 1819).

[139] "The Picture of the Capuchin Chapel," *The Repertory* (April 15, 1820).

[140] March 29, 1820 fell on a Wednesday. *New-England Palladium* (March 31, 1820). In another report, on Saturday March 25, nearly 200 people visited the exhibition. "Capuchin Chapel," *New-England Palladium* (March 28, 1820).

referring to it in its pages. One writer employed *Capuchin Chapel* as a foil to highlight a "country girl's" perceptive shortcomings. Initially unimpressed, the young woman called the painting a "dingy picture" and turned her back upon it. However, while talking to friends the sun emerged from clouds to light the painting. When the young woman turned around, she noted: "'Ah! they've opened that window at the back of the altar and I can see it nicely now.'"[141]

Granet's painting became so popular in New England that many versions, by Granet and others, toured throughout the decade. After its initial appearance in Boston in 1820, one version or another of *Capuchin Chapel* was almost constantly on view or in the news there. Over a year after the exhibit, a writer for the *Boston Commercial Gazette* was still using the painting as a standard of excellence. While writing about Henry Sargent's *Dinner Party*, he noted the painting's similar dimensions to *Capuchin Chapel* as well as the focus on "the interior effect of architecture" as a subject **(Figure 10)**.[142] When Wiggin granted Thomas Sully permission to copy his painting, multiple New England newspapers reported the artist's travel to Boston as an event of importance.[143] A copy by an unidentified artist toured smaller New England towns in the second half of

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[141] *Boston Intelligencer & Evening Gazette* (April 29, 1820).

[142] "Communication: The Dinner Party by Col. Sargent," *Boston Commercial Gazette* (July 2, 1821). Later that same year, another blurb appeared linking these two paintings: "*The Dinner Party,* painted by our townsman Col. Sargent, is now exhibiting in New-York, where it appears to have received much deserved approbation. The painting is publicly spoken of by those who have examined it, in comparison with the *Capuchin Chapel,* as "its *equal in talent,* and *superior in point of interest.*" *Independent Chronicle and Boston Patriot* (October 6, 1821). Emphasis in original. Mr. Brown, the proprietor who exhibited Sargent's painting in Boston in 1821, made the direct comparison himself in the advertisement, stating that *The Dinner Party* was "Painted after the manner of the justly celebrated picture of the CAPUCHIN CHAPEL…'. "Advertisement," *The New-England Galaxy and United States Literary Advertiser* IV, 190 (June 1, 1821) 135.

[143] *Columbian Centinel* (August 8, 1821); *Rhode-Island American, and General Advertiser* (August 10, 1821); *Providence Gazette* (August 15, 1821); "Capuchin Chapel," *Boston Daily Advertiser* (August 25, 1821); "Capuchin Chapel," *Independent Chronicle and Boston Patriot* (November 7, 1821).

1822.[144] The quality of this painting apparently was not as high as either Granet's original or of the copy made by Sully, for when the latter exhibited in Portsmouth, N.H. in 1823, the *New-Hampshire Gazette* commented that Sully's work was "far superior to the one exhibited in this town a short time since."[145] Benjamin Wiggin also displayed his *Capuchin Chapel* several times, always for the benefit of a charitable cause. In May of 1827 he loaned it to the Boston Athenaeum, which used the profits ($350 plus interest) to buy a large landscape by Alvan Fisher.[146] In July of the same year, Wiggin allowed the painting to be exhibited in Providence "for the benefit of a religious society, in the town of Hopkinton, New Hampshire."[147]

Sully's *Capuchin Chapel*, which at least some news organs continued to refer to by Granet's formal title, toured the eastern seaboard of the United States extensively. It visited Savannah, Charleston, and Baltimore in 1821 and 1822.[148] In 1823 it went on view in Richmond, VA; returned to Baltimore at the Peale Museum; New York;

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[144] The painting, by an unknown artist but perhaps by a Mr. Borthwick or Mr. Cook (see text below for both artists' versions), exhibited in Providence, RI; Salem, MA; Newburyport, MA; and Portsmouth, NH. In both Providence and Salem, the painting exhibited with a *Death of Christ*, presumably by John H. J. Brower, whose *Death of Christ* was exhibited in 1823 in Charleston with another copy of the *Capuchin Chapel*. "Historical Painting," *Providence Gazette* (June 12, 1822). "Just Arrived," *City Gazette and Commercial Advertiser* (January 20, 1823). The two paintings only exhibited for two weeks in Salem. "Just arrived in Salem," *The Salem Gazette* (July 4, 1822). In Newburyport, the proprietor only charged 12 ½ cents' admission, unusually low for the time period. "The Painting of the Capuchin Chapel," *Newburyport Herald* (August 20, 1822). *The Salem Gazette* (September 3, 1822).

[145] "Capuchin Chapel," *New-Hampshire Gazette* (October 14, 1823).

[146] Stanley Ellis Cushing and David B. Dearinger, *Acquired Tastes: 200 Years of Collecting for the Boston Athenaeum* (Boston, MA: Boston Athenaeum, 2006) 42.

[147] "Capuchin Chapel," *Providence Patriot* (July 11, 1827). The painting was on view from July 17 through September 5. "Capuchin Chapel," *Rhode Island American & Providence Gazette* (July 27, 1827).

[148] "Fine Arts," *City Gazette and Commercial Daily Advertiser* (December 22, 1821). "Capuchin Chapel, by Mr. Sully," *Baltimore Patriot* (April 10, 1822). "Granet's Capuchin Chapel at Rome, by M. Sully," *City Gazette and Commercial Daily Advertiser* (January 7, 1822). An advertisement for Rembrandt Peale's *Court of Death* ran on the same page. Both exhibitions cost fifty cents, a relatively high price for that time period. The painting remained in Charleston for eight weeks, closing on March 2. *City Gazette and Commercial Daily Advertiser* (March 2, 1822). In Baltimore, the admission was twenty-five cents. The exhibition closed on May 18. "Capuchin Chapel Will Close," *Baltimore Patriot* (May 16, 1822).

Saratoga, NY; Portland, ME; Portsmouth, NH; and Boston.[149] In early 1825, Charles Bird King exhibited *Capuchin Chapel* at his Gallery.[150] Sully was not the only artist to exhibit a copy of Granet's painting. In 1821, a version of *Capuchin Chapel* by "Mr. Borthwick" was reported on exhibit in Philadelphia.[151] By May of that year, the painting had moved on to the Rotunda in New York, where it was exhibiting "in a room by itself."[152] Other lesser-known artists copied Granet's painting as well. In early 1823, a British artist named Mr. Cook displayed a version of the painting in Charleston.[153] In 1834, William Bambrough advertised in Columbus, Ohio that he was both available to take portraits and had mounted an "Exhibition … of various PAINTINGS" including Capuchin Chapel.[154] In 1839, Mr. Francis C. Hill exhibited his *Capuchin Chapel* at the Ladies Fair in Charleston, SC.[155]

The popularity of *Capuchin Chapel* shows that many nineteenth-century Americans were interested in the visual arts and were willing to pay for the privilege of the experience. It is less clear why this painting's exhibition was so much more successful than that of others. Many critics described the hyper-reality of the style as

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[149] "Sully's Capuchin Chapel," *Baltimore Patriot* (May 10, 1823); for reprint of column from *New York National Advertiser*, "Independence," *Richmond Enquirer* (7/11/1823); *Saratoga Sentinel* (July 15, 1823); for Portland exhibition, "Sully's Capuchin Chapel," *Eastern Argus* (September 23, 1823); "Capuchin Chapel," *New Hampshire Gazette* (October 14, 1823); "Sully's Capuchin Chapel," *Independent Chronicle and Boston Patriot* (November 15, 1823).

[150] The painting returned to King's Gallery in early 1830, exhibiting for at least a month at that time. "Sully's Capuchin Chapel, and Mr. King's Gallery of Paintings," *Daily National Journal* (January 25, 1825). "Sully's Capuchin Chapel," *Daily National Intelligencer* (March 4, 1830).

[151] *Connecticut Gazette* (April 4, 1821).

[152] "Celebrated Painting," *New York Gazette & General Advertiser* (May 9, 1821). May 22, 1821 the same paper announced that the exhibition would close on June 7.

[153] "Just Arrived," *Charleston City Gazette and Commercial Advertiser* (January 20, 1823).

[154] "Portrait Painting," *Ohio State Journal and Columbus Gazette* (November 8, 1834). Bamgrough likely copied *Capuchin Chapel* from an engraving, for he also advertised another copy after Granet, *The Nunnery, with the Ceremony of a Lady taking the Vail.* "Mr. Hayward's Choice Engravings" went on view in Charleston in 1835, and included in their number were both *Capuchin Chapel* and another image after Granet that the advertisement describes as "Exterior of a Nunnery with a Nun taking the Veil, etc." *The Southern Patriot* (March 3, 1835).

[155] "Communication: The Ladies Fair," *The Southern Patriot* (April 25, 1839).

fascinating to viewers, who truly felt that they were looking through a window into another world. When Sully's copy exhibited at King's Gallery in 1825, a *National Intelligencer* writer described it as "a triumph of the pencil over the senses."[156] The attention local newspapers paid to the painting heightened excitement about the exhibition; as it traveled, the curious lined up to see what the papers, which frequently reprinted content from other sources, had been discussing. Whatever the reason for its success, the painting was evidence to struggling artists and to gallery proprietors that there was an available audience for the visual arts, if only they could determine how best to awaken its interest. It was more difficult to sustain a permanent gallery space than a temporary exhibition, however. Charles Bird King became one of the few to succeed at achieving a balance.

Beyond identifying a ready audience for the right sort of visual arts display, the example of *Capuchin Chapel* calls into question the modern notion that copies are nothing more than mindless repetitions of an original work of art and as such unworthy of study. Based on nineteenth-century reviews, American critics judged a copy for the artist's ability to reproduce the style and the effect of the original (or what they presumed of the original), as well as the original artist's genius in composition. An anonymous Philadelphia *Democratic Press* critic of Sully's *Capuchin Chapel* praised just these qualities when the painting went on view at Earle & Sully's Gallery in 1821:

> Some months ago a picture of Granet's was exhibited at Earle & Sully's Gallery called "the Capuchin Chapel." It was greatly and deservedly admired…. The great success of this picture and the liberality of its owner, united with a love of distinction and fame, have induced Mr. Sully to paint a copy of it. – This copy is now to be seen in the same gallery, in the same situation, which was occupied by Mr. Granet's picture. Those who have seen the picture will doubtless wish to see

[156] "The Capuchin Chapel, "*Daily National Intelligencer* (January 14, 1825).

> the copy. We have seen, and greatly admired it. It is a beautiful painting and apparently a very accurate and exact copy….
>
> We should suppose the garments of the Monks, in the picture before us to be more exquisitely finished than those in Granet's painting. The cloaks are so decidedly woolly in their texture, that you associate with them the idea of warmth and comfort. The nap is as clearly raised upon them as on the green baize on which your hand rests.[157]

The critic devoted the majority of the lengthy article (three-quarters of a newspaper column) to Sully's ability to reproduce the minute details of the original. Sully's copy of Capuchin Chapel was a curiosity for those who had already seen Granet's original, and the author was disappointed that he could not place the original next to the copy. The specific reference to the quality of the woolen cloaks highlights Sully's technical prowess and suggests that Sully actually went beyond Granet in that element of the illusion. With the final paragraph, the critic lauded Sully for his achievement: "If the fame of Mr. Sully were not already established, this copy would place it beyond the reach of envy or enmity." To this writer, it was immaterial that Sully had copied another artist's work; Sully's *Capuchin Chapel* was a testament to the artist's general ability and the reviewer celebrated it as an independent work of art.

Reproductive copies have re-emerged as subjects of scholarly attention and respect only recently. Over the course of the nineteenth century, the intentional multiple increasingly was dismissed. The French painter Jacques Nicolas Paillot de Montabert for instance in 1855 wrote, "the conceit of the copyist quite often imposes the name of creation upon what is only a successful aping."[158] In a paradigm that celebrates the

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[157] The *City Gazette* cites the "*Philadelphia Democratic Press"* (parentheses theirs) as the source. "Mr. Sully's Capuchin Church," *City Gazette and Commercial Daily Advertiser* (November 20, 1821). The article was also reprinted under the same title in the *Boston Daily Advertiser* (November 7, 1821).

[158] Jacques Nicolas Paillot de Montabert, *L'Aristaire, livre des principales initiations aux beaux-arts* (Paris: Johanneau, 1855) 180. Cited by Richard Shiff, "The Original, the Imitation, the Copy, and the Spontaneous Classic: Theory and Painting in Nineteenth-Century France," *Yale French Studies* 66 (1984) 41.

originating genius of the artist, the copy is seen as lacking the power of the original. Whether the copyist is the original artist, a student, a forger, or an accomplished artist, modern consensus considers only the original work to be worthy of study. This attitude towards copies fails to recognize the role that they played prior to the digital age in rendering masterworks accessible to a wider audience or the status that well-executed copies enjoyed as artwork in their own rights.

A growing body of scholarship, primarily though not exclusively focused on the nineteenth-century French academic tradition, has begun to reorient the debate to recognize that the dismissal of the reproductive copy was neither swift nor complete.[159] Not all artists and patrons agreed with Montabert. The reproduction was and remained critical to the academic system, not just in providing students with sources for emulation, but as importantly for extending the reach of artists' fame and of prevailing master styles more generally. As we have seen in considering collections of the colonial and early American periods, this was especially true in the United States, where well into the nineteenth century copies were frequently the only way of gaining access to artistic masterpieces.

One of the best examples is the collection that William Walters of Baltimore assembled in the post-Civil War period. For a recent exhibition and catalogue, the Walters Art Museum turned a critical eye on repetition pieces within their own collection, transforming a potential negative into an asset by shining light on the reasons Walters had knowingly acquired copies. The resulting exhibition, *The Repeating Image: Multiples in*

[159] In addition to other studies cited in these pages, see Egon Verheyen, "'The Most Exact Representation of the Original': Remarks on Portraits of George Washington by Gilbert Stuart and Rembrandt Peale," Reta*ining the Original: Multiple Originals, Copies, and Reproductions. Studies in the History of Art* Vol. XX (Washington, DC: University Press of New England for the National Gallery of Art, 1989) 127-139; Thomas E. Crow, *Emulation: Making Artists for Revolutionary France* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1995); Patricia Mainardi, "The 19th-Century Art Trade: Copies, Variations, Replicas," *Van Gogh Museum Journal* (2000) 62-73.

French Painting from David to Matisse, and in particular Stephen Bann's contribution "Reassessing Repetition in Nineteenth-Century Academic Painting: Delaroche, Gérôme, Ingres," suggests that, as late as the second half of the nineteenth century, American patrons and critics considered good copies to be valuable reflections of the original artist's intent. The most important copy William Walters acquired for his collection is also perhaps the easiest to defend, a painting after Paul Delaroche's *Hémicycle* at the École des Beaux Arts **(Figure 11)**. In this case the original was a massive-scale wall mural that Walters could not have hoped to procure. Instead he acquired the copy painted by Charles Béranger and heavily retouched by Delaroche. The painting, which served initially as the basis for an engraving by Louis-Pierre Henriquel-Dupont, was lauded in critical terms that rivaled those bestowed on the wall mural itself. Writing in 1870, American critic Edward Strahan called Walters' Hémicycle the "palm" of his collection:

> I have seen nothing in America which seems so perfectly to bridge the civilization of the two continents, and place the connoisseurship of the new world in connection with that of the old.[160]

Strahan's celebration of the Hémicycle reduction is even more interesting for his praise of Walters' connoisseurship. The connoisseur recognizes quality and authenticity. Strahan's use of the term "connoisseur" to describe Walters in connection with a completely acknowledged copy, and indeed a painting designed as the basis for a reproductive print, is more than a little surprising from the standpoint of modern attitudes towards reproductive material. Yet as late as the post-Civil War period, the stigma of the reproductive copy focused on the many American collectors who did not know the difference between the work of a master's hand and that of a poor forger, in other words of inept connoisseurs. Strahan's invocation of connoisseurship places primary

[160] *The Repeating Image: Multiples in French Painting from David to Matisse* (Baltimore and New Haven: Yale University Press for the Walters Art Museum, 2007) 34.

importance on William Walters' ability to detect quality of conception and execution; the hand responsible for the execution is only of secondary importance, so long as it is expert. Strahan in his review does not even refer to the concept of a unique original.

Critic Clarence Cook, in 1861, wrote in equally enthusiastic terms about copies after J.M.W. Turner's *Fighting Temeraire* (oil) and *Golden Bough* (watercolor) that Thomas Charles Farrer painted and brought back to the United States.

> A few original pictures by Turner there are in America; but they are not his best, nor are they accessible. Engravings of all his great pictures are plenty and comparatively cheap, but, for the most part, they are mere caricatures. We would have gladly studied copies, but they have rarely appeared among us, and it is only to-day that we are able, by the zeal and industry of Mr. Farrer, to enjoy really excellent copies of two of Turner's great works. They are, of course, much reduced in size, but the effect is so faithfully translated that we seem to miss nothing, and those who know and love the originals best are the ones who will express the greatest pleasure in these exquisite transcripts from the most poetical of modern painters. [161]

Cook notes the greatest problem for American artists and art lovers – quality. He acknowledges that original Turner paintings could be found in the United States; however, these were not the artist's "great pictures." Cook recognized the value of a well-executed copy of a masterpiece that could not be matched by a lesser original. This situation soon would change. By the end of the nineteenth century, American wealth was such that a few families – Morgan, Frick, Gardner, Havemeyer – were able to begin to form substantial collections of masterworks.[162] Additionally, the introduction in the late nineteenth century of carbon prints after original artwork shifted the paradigm away from painted copies and towards more mechanical forms of reproduction. During the life of King's Gallery, and through the third quarter of the century, the painted copy remained

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[161] 'Fine Arts: Fine Copies of Turner's Art,' *Evening Post* (New York), 9 Nov. 1861.

[162] One should note that not all of the works of art these collectors acquired were authentic originals. Alice Cooney Frelinghuysen et al., *Splendid Legacy: The Havemeyer Collection* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1993) chronicles some of the Havemeyer missteps.

an effective and in many cases the only option and was recognized and celebrated as such.

Cook and Strahan's vocal support for painted copies well into the second half of the nineteenth century bolsters our understanding of the important roles copies played in King's Gallery of Paintings. At least one third of the paintings King placed on view were copies, a far greater percentage than that in any other gallery collection since Smibert's eighteenth-century studio. King's training and attitudes emerged from the eighteenth-century tradition that also produced Antoine Quatremère de Quincy, Secrétaire perpetual of the Académie des Beaux-Arts from 1816-1839. Quatremère wrote on the subject of copies and the concept of imitation and invention in *An Essay on the Nature, the End, and the Means of Imitation in the Fine Arts* (1837). He believed, following the eighteenth-century French philosopher Étienne Bonnot de Condillac, that invention required a pre-existing visual vocabulary; in essence, the recombination of ideas and images produced invention. This is consistent with Sir Joshua Reynolds' attitude towards invention as well. In his Second Discourse, Reynolds stated:

> Invention, strictly speaking, is little more than a new combination of those images which have been previously gathered and deposited in the memory: nothing can come of nothing: he who has laid up no materials, can produce no combinations.[163]

In other words, all invention was in reality imitation, or a copy of elements of visual vocabulary that preceded it. In order to create, the artist required a vocabulary, and an audience fluent in that vocabulary. Without that, a composition would be unintelligible to the viewer. Based on this understanding of invention, the education of artists and

[163] Sir Joshua Reynolds, *Discourses on Art With Selections from 'The Idler'*, Stephen O. Mitchell, Ed. (New York: Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1965) 15-16.

viewers alike in the history of Western tradition was critical to the ability of American artists to produce a new, American artwork.

CHARLES BIRD KING'S GALLERY: MORE THAN JUST A "GENTEEL RESORT"

Whether by his design or by chance, King's background prepared him not only to open his own Gallery but to present it in the manner he did. He focused the collection on European copies as complements to his own original compositions and augmented the display with periodic single-picture exhibitions. Beginning with his apprenticeship with Edward Savage, King worked with someone who had himself studied in London and who subsequently opened a picture gallery. King then traveled to London where he studied European painting directly and came under the influence of the Anglo appreciation of seventeenth-century Dutch masterworks, in particular as filtered through Sir David Wilkie, whose career developed while King was in London.[164] At the same time, he was witness to the nuanced London art market, where exhibition strategies were far more sophisticated than in the United States at the time. These experiences defined King's approach to his Gallery, and account for its success with visitors where other artists, who maintained a different balance in the parts, were unsuccessful. Important though King's original compositions were to the overall balance of the collection, its importance as a site of education in the arts developed from the many copies King placed on display and it was therefore through the copies that King made his most lasting impression on the development of the arts in the United States.

Audience

Reconstructing the audience for King's Gallery of Paintings is largely a speculative endeavor. No surviving guest book or financial records document who

[164] For analysis of King's interest in Wilkie, see Chapter Three.

visited or in what numbers. Nonetheless, the Gallery must have been a success relative to other period collections in its first two decades. From what we know of King's character, King was an astute businessman. He would not have continued to put financial and creative resources behind a failing venture. Though he was a successful portraitist and also received small legacies when his parents passed away, he did not manage the Gallery as a philanthropic venture.

King charged admission from the beginning and actively promoted the Gallery by driving audience traffic to special exhibitions. All of his advertisements for special exhibitions, as well as general advertisements for the permanent collection in the 1840s, registered a twenty-five cent admission fee. This was the most common charge for any type of exhibition and remained a stable figure throughout the ante-bellum period. Other scholars have written about the frequently purposeful limitation the admissions fee placed on the lower end of the social spectrum. David Brigham argues particularly convincingly that the twenty-five cent fee Charles Willson Peale charged to visit his Philadelphia Museum excluded many Americans.[165] Accepting that not every American had access to King's or any other admission-charging picture gallery, twenty-five cents placed the Gallery within reach of a wide swath of Americans, both local Washington residents and visitors. The fee also was consistent with that of other contemporary entertainments.

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[165] The fee to visit the Philadelphia Museum increased if the visitor wished to view all parts of the collection since the mastodon skeleton required a separate twenty-five-cent admission. David R. Brigham, *Public Culture in the Early Republic: Peale's Museum and Its Audience* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1995). According to the economic historians at Measuring Worth, the average annual wage of an unskilled laborer in the United States in 1824 was $78. In 1844, towards the end of the Gallery's active period, the average annual wage was $77.70. A 25-cent admission fee represented 1/6 of a worker's weekly earnings, placing a rare visit to an entertainment venue within reach, but only barely, and out of reach for a male primary income earner with a family. **www.measuringworth.com** Measuring Worth draws its raw data from Paul A. David and Peter Solar, "A Bicentenarary Contribution to the History of the Cost of Living in America," *Research in Economic History* II (Greenwich, CT: JAI Press Inc., 1977) 1-80.

The *National Intelligencer* editorial and George Watterston both refer to King's Gallery as a "lounge," a common term from the time period that tells us a great deal about the type of visitor the Gallery was likely to attract. That two critics, writing twenty years apart, both referred to the Gallery as a lounge not only establishes the space as an appropriate refuge for the well-educated and refined, but provides evidence for the longevity of the term as it was first employed by Federalists at the beginning of the nineteenth century. In 1828 Noah Webster defined lounge in his American Dictionary of the English Language: "v.i. to live in idleness; to spend time lazily."[166] The paradigm of the American dream, which is premised on the belief that anyone who applies him or herself and who works hard has a chance at success, casts the terms "idleness" and "lazily" in a negative light. During the early part of the nineteenth century, however, some Americans considered lounging to be a laudable and even political act.

In a study of the Federalist writer and cultural critic Joseph Dennie, William C. Dowling argues convincingly for a different understanding of lounging in which the absence of work takes on positive moral and political meaning.[167] Federalists such as Dennie and Fisher Ames watched the rise of Jeffersonian Republicanism in dismay, in the belief that the policies Jefferson and his supporters put in place set personal interest ahead of the good of the country. Indeed the Federalist Party as such coalesced during the election cycle that produced Thomas Jefferson's Presidential victory in 1801, and its primary literary organ *The Port Folio* was founded in January of that year, just prior to Jefferson's election in March. While Jeffersonian Republicans portrayed Federalists as out-of-touch elitists, and the Federalist Party as such was at the point of collapse by the

[166] First edition published in 1828. Noah Webster, *An American Dictionary of the English Language* (New York: Johnson Reprint Corp., 1970).
[167] William C. Dowling, *Literary Federalism in the Age of Jefferson: Joseph Dennie and* The Port Folio, *1801-1812* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1999).

1810s, Federalism as espoused by *The Port Folio* and others was principled republicanism in the classical sense of the Roman Republic. Federalists contrasted the disinterested political leadership of a true Republic with the leadership of the democratic United States in stark terms that predicted ruin at the hands of a self-serving demos, just as the Roman Republic ultimately had failed. Federalists believed that the single-minded pursuit of wealth, and the industry required for that endeavor, was in conflict with the character traits necessary for disinterested leadership. One writer for *The Port Folio* commented, "the characteristic spirit of our people is commercial, and wherever it predominates, pursuits, not auxiliary to its purposes, are in low estimation."[168]

The Port Folio referred frequently to lounging and to loungers. A column by "Samuel Saunter" called "The American Lounger" ran regularly starting with the first issue of *The Port Folio's* second volume. Even earlier, in the periodical's third issue, columns titled "Miscellany. Lessons for Loungers" and "The Lounger's Diary" appeared side by side. The former column advises loungers about town to protect themselves from crowds by holding their canes under their right arms, perpendicular to their bodies. The latter follows a typical Sunday in the life of a lounger. The protagonist passes through a languorous day in which he eats, drinks, and wanders about town visiting friends; the only mention of the world of business immediately causes pain. He complains that it is "Too cold for church" and reads half of a bill, only to stop when struck with a headache.[169]

Lounging, then, represented for Federalists the opposite of the drive for economic success, and as such was a laudable recreation. Though cloaked rhetorically in satire, the

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[168] "AN EXAMINATION Of the causes that have retarded the progress of literature in The United States," *The Port Folio* N.S. IV:23 (December 5, 1807) 356.
[169] "THE LOUNGER'S DIARY," *The Port Folio* (January 17, 1801).

message embedded in the various essays was serious. To lounge was not to waste time, but to actively employ one's time in a manner that was antithetical to the avaricious pursuit of personal gain. To return to Webster's terms, "lazily" and "in idleness" do not equate to being lazy. Rather, they allow for time spent in otium, which Dowling translates as "learned leisure," stating that it

> lies at the heart of Federalist values precisely as it operates to sustain civic virtue even while a republic is increasing in wealth and populousness. For otium, still carrying associations with Aristotle's theory of leisure as the basis of genuine civilization, is the negation of wealth pursued for the purpose of appetite or ostentation.[170]

Federalist political theory looked back directly at classical history and considered knowledge of Ancient Greek and Latin to be critical to the moral education of future American political leaders. Federalists viewed human history as cyclical. They believed that Jeffersonian Republicans were attempting to live in a perpetual present, which undermined the importance of learning from events in history in order to avoid repeating other civilizations' errors. It is not a stretch, then, to see that knowledge of the visual arts and particularly of the works of the European masters was important to education. To spend time in contemplation of the arts, however, was to spend time in what from a purely business standpoint must be considered idleness. Which returns us to King's Gallery of Paintings as a place where one might record (as did Charles Francis Adams in 1828) that he "lounged until late."

Both Watterston in 1842 and the *National Intelligencer* in 1824 suggested that the Gallery was a worthwhile destination for visitors to Washington and described the space as a pleasant place to pass time. That visitors might be expected to lounge did imply a class status, but from the perspective of Federalist policies and attitudes it represented

[170] Dowling, *Literary Federalism in the Age of Jefferson,* 40.

more importantly a designation of educational status and refinement. The Gallery was a refuge for anyone who had received a classical education and was a place of instruction as well as of amusement. Confirmation of the Gallery as such a space comes from no less than a young member of the Adams family, long-time Federalists (though the Federalist party was defunct by the 1820s), and champions of a classical education. In 1828 Charles Francis Adams wrote in his diary that he and a friend "walked out…and paid visits to the Secretary of War and Mr. King's Gallery of Paintings where we lounged until late."[171] Adams' reference to lounging identifies his hours at the Gallery as leisure time spent with friends. It is certainly not surprising that King's Gallery, described by others as having "handsomely finished" rooms (Watterston) "arranged with neatness and effect" (*National Intelligencer*), encouraged visits primarily from the better sort.[172] However, King's Gallery was much more than an agreeable salon in which to meet with other well-heeled Americans. The Federalist approach to education was in agreement with King's own attitudes towards knowledge of the history of art, as a starting point for the creation and appreciation of a new American art. In this sense, lounging at King's Gallery would have been an active pursuit indeed.

King only left behind one reference to lounging, in the title of his original composition *Rip Van Winkle Returning from a Morning's Lounge* **(Figure 77)**. If we approach the painting as an independent work, the title supports the more traditionally understood negative characterization of lounging. Rip, who is known to be a worthless husband and father uninterested in providing for his family, demonstrates that lounging is an evil that produces despair and misery. However, to look at this work on its own is to

[171] Adams, *Diary*, II, 299.

[172] Brigham's study of the Peale Museum makes a similar argument; he begins the introduction with the statement: "Although Peale proposed that the museum was democratically open, the composition of his audience was significantly limited, especially with respect to social rank, gender, and race." Brigham, *Public Culture in the Early Republic*, 1.

miss the complex cultural and political message that King constructed by pairing *Rip Van Winkle Returning from a Morning's Lounge* with another original composition, *Itinerant Artist* **(Figure 76)**. In the latter painting, a rural American family shows its ability to engage in American culture through hard work, but work that supports their entry into an aesthetic education and refinement as defined by the commissioning of a painting of the matriarch. In this sense, King's use of the term in his painting of Rip Van Winkle takes on the tone of satire. Rip cannot appropriately lounge, not because of his social status, but because he does not have the educational background (nor the desire to acquire it) for the pursuit. King contrasts Rip's academic and moral lethargy with the family in *Itinerant Artist*, whose leisure time they employ in a modest version of lounging as they draw, whittle, and sit for a portrait.

The Collection of Paintings

A New Guide to Washington provides us with an important benchmark – in 1842, King's Gallery of Paintings consisted of approximately 260 paintings. King's collection was not static; we can document paintings leaving his possession as gifts that presumably he displayed prior to giving away, and he must have continued to paint copies and original compositions since the collection increased in size over time. Even so, we also have a good sense of what King displayed over the course of time based on evidence for dispersal of the collection in the last year of the artist's life and after his death. King made significant gifts and then a bequest to the Redwood Library and Athenaeum in Newport, Rhode Island.[173] The Redwood Library, which received 75 paintings from

[173] The paintings King displayed in his Gallery are known from a variety of sources. The most accurate list can be compiled through the many gifts he made to the Redwood Library and Athenaeum in Newport, Rhode Island over the course of his career in conjunction with the list of gifts he made to individuals at the end of his life. This list is neither complete nor totally accurate as it does not include works that left King's collection prior to the end of his life (unless they went to the Redwood Library earlier) and does not encompass all gifts. Additionally, it does not give us insight into King's manner of exhibition, and not all

King's collection as a bequest, was by far the greatest beneficiary of King's will. These paintings joined an additional 147 paintings he had given earlier in his career and in the year prior to his death to bring the total to 212. Appendix 1 provides details regarding the timeline for all of the gifts. Based on the size of the gift, it appears that King hoped that the Redwood Library would reproduce and perpetuate his Gallery of Paintings within its own space. Unfortunately, that never came to pass. At some point after 1885, when the Redwood Library published a catalogue of their collection, they deaccessioned all of King's paintings except the portraits.

Aside from the Redwood Library gifts, King made gifts of an unknown number of paintings in the last year of his life to friends and relatives who visited him, and his will further designates gifts of more than 35 paintings to specific family members as well as a four each to the Boys' and Girls' Schools of Newport.[174] Unfortunately, the will identifies the paintings by number and not by name. Many likely were portraits, but undoubtedly he gave away other paintings, probably works that had been on display in the Gallery as well. As a result of the way in which King dispersed the collection, few of his original compositions and copies after European artists are known today, though from time to time they appear on the open market.

Of the 212 paintings the Redwood Library received from King, their institutional records attributed only ten to other artists.[175] The library attributed a total of 60 portraits

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works may have been on view at the same time. However, it is a useful point of reference and in coordination with other descriptions of the Gallery it appears likely that the paintings in King's possession at the end of his life were those on view.

[174] The gifts appear in a codicil to the will dated October 23, 1861. The will was filed with the Orphans Court in the District of Columbia on March 22, 1862. Unfortunately the location of the will is currently unknown. I thank Andrew J. Cosentino for sharing with me his photocopy, which he received on January 28, 1974 from the Washington National Records Center, 4205 Suitland Road, Suitland MD.

[175] These paintings are a *Self-Portrait,* G.P.A. Healy (24); *Gen. Andrew Jackson,* Auguste Herview (76); *Death of St. Anthony,* Abraham Bloemart (82); *Fruit Piece,* Grambita Russipoli Del Sig di Sala (19); *Lion Hunt,* Simon de Vos (11); *Ruins in Adrian's Villa, near Tivoli,* J. G. Chapman (198); *View of Washington,*

to King, as well as an additional 28 he copied primarily from Old Masters and Gilbert Stuart. The Redwood identified 9 paintings in other genres as "originals" in the 1885 Catalogue; these joined another 27 that research strongly suggests were original compositions.[176] They accessioned thirty-one paintings in other genres identified as copies after named artists' works. This leaves forty-five works for which an attribution is in question. Many, though not all, of these paintings were original compositions. The difficulty of speculating from the titles whether the paintings were original compositions or copies is reflective of King's propensity towards producing compositions that fall into the same categories as those with known attributions. King produced several genre paintings and landscapes on American subjects, but these were in the minority within his oeuvre. Of the paintings that entered the Redwood collection without attribution, there are no identifiably "American" subjects. In other words, even in his original compositions King mostly hewed to European styles and subjects.

The Print Collection's Role in the Creation of the Gallery

While many of the paintings that King gave the Redwood have not survived, another large collection of visual material has. When he died, King left seventeen volumes of engravings to the Redwood Library. All told, King donated to the library well in excess of one thousand engravings, all of which are still in its collection.[177] In

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J. G. Chapman (46); *Flower Piece* (156); *Flower Piece* (185); and *Girl and Parrot*, Thomas Sully (45). *1885 Catalogue* number appears in parentheses behind each artist.

[176] This dissertation is not a catalogue raisonné and it is outside the purview to describe each of the works, all of which appear in Appendix One, in detail. The reasons for including the paintings as original compositions include style in the cases where the original painting survives, as well as subject matter consistent with other paintings or with King's large collection of prints. All of the paintings I consider to fit into this category are also deemed original by Andrew Cosentino, author of the catalogue of King's work. Andrew J. Cosentino, *The Paintings of Charles Bird King (1785-1862)* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press for the National Collection of Fine Arts, 1977).

[177] The Redwood Library accessioned the volumes as follows: "Portraits, containing 48 plates; Portraits by Reynolds, 43 plates; Raphael's Bible, 52 plates; Classical, containing 104 plates; Classical, containing 26 plates, School of Raphael, Admiranda Romanorum Antiquitatum; Miscellaneous, 94 plates, Miscellaneous,

addition, he gave one hundred prints to the Smithsonian.[178] King's foci in developing his print collection can tell us a great deal about the overall composition of the picture gallery, for the strengths in the print collection reinforce what we know from the Redwood Library records and shed light on the likely style and content of the paintings with unknown attribution or content.

While King was not the only American artist to collect prints, his is both the only documented print collection from the first half of the nineteenth century and the only collection of any kind that survives substantially intact.[179] In his collecting, King

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36 plates; Miscellaneous, 60 plates; Architecture, Historical, 89; Religious, 78; Landscapes, 141; Costumes, 61." Handwritten accessions records for the Redwood Library and Athenaeum, July 10, 1862. These records state that the Redwood Library received twenty volumes of engravings from King, but the records only list seventeen.

[178] These numbers and lists do not reflect any individual prints he gave away as gifts late in his life. In his inquiry to the Redwood Library regarding their interest in acquiring King's print collection, George Gordon King commented that his cousin had given away impressions from his print collection as "remembrances" to visitors during his last illness. Redwood Library and Athenaeum, *To Preserve Hidden Treasures: from the scrapbooks of Charles Bird King* Newport, RI: Redwood Library and Athenaeum, 1997) n.p. King made his gift to the Smithsonian in December, 1861. It consisted of engravings after British subjects (primarily by Sir Anthony van Dyck and Sir Joshua Reynolds) as well as after various old master paintings such as *Massacre of Innocents* after Rubens, *Scene from Roman History* after Giulio Romano, and *French Second Rate Ship* after Willem van de Velde. Unfortunately, though a list survives, the prints themselves have been lost.

[179] While insufficient records for other collections make it impossible to argue for the collection's unique or representative status relative to other artists' collections, we may fruitfully contrast it to the collections amassed by wealthy American gentlemen during the same time period. The two best-documented contemporary print collections belonged to Luman Reed and Robert Gilmor, both of whom owned large but by no means as extensive collections of prints. As a point of comparison, Luman Reed's widow made a gift of approximately 250 engravings, valued at $1,000, to the New York Gallery in 1844. When the secretary to the Gallery, which was organized to preserve Reed's collection, recorded the gift, he noted that "Only a part of these have as yet been framed and exhibited." Recognizing the value of the collection, however, the New York Gallery obtained space at the National Academy of Design to display not only Reed's painting collection, but also examples from his print collection.

Reed like King used his collection as an educational resource: he and his visitors could learn to understand quality and the styles of the great European artists through the prints. Reed however acquired a smaller and more targeted collection than did King. Of the one-hundred-eighteen documented prints in the Reed collection (less than fifty percent of the collection survives), thirteen are after Rubens, and sixteen are after Raphael. The collection contains an entire series documenting details from Michelangelo's *Last Judgment* in the Sistine Chapel, and prints after other Italian artists including Guido Reni make up another twenty-two images. In all, reproductive prints after Italian artists make up almost half of the extant collection (58 images). Reed also collected prints after Claude (3), Poussin (5), and Salvatore Rosa (1), as well as seven Netherlandish prints. While King as well owned many prints after Raphael (27) and Rubens (33), his collection focused less on major artistic masterpieces such as Michelangelo's *Last Judgment*, or other

emphasized the work of British artists of the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, Old Master prints, and landscapes. Just as he did not collect paintings by other artists, King collected very few original prints (as opposed to prints that reproduced paintings). Original etchings by Rembrandt, including his *Descent from the Cross* and *Christ Driving the Money Changers from the Temple*, were the exception. The majority of the prints King collected were suitable as reference material for portraiture, appropriate material for copying for his Gallery, or source material for the production of history paintings. King, then, with the exception of his Rembrandt etchings, did not purchase prints for qualities inherent to the print medium. He acquired prints as tools, reference materials for his own work or for copies.

King likely assembled the majority of his print collection while he was a student in London. Material is fragmentary on the American print import market, particularly in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, but European prints were available through both engravers and booksellers, and it is possible that King received prints via colleagues abroad as well. However, he had more immediate access to prints as a student in London than after his return to the United States. In addition, while he owned a number of lithographs that dated to the 1820s, and the earliest dated print in the collection was produced in 1839, these images formed no more than five percent of the whole, and King owned almost no engravings after the work of living artists. For instance, King did not own a single print after the work of Sir David Wilkie, despite the fact that Wilkie appears

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Vatican artwork, and more on demonstrating breadth of styles. The similarities in categories of imagery the artist and gentleman-collector acquired do suggest, however, that King and Reed shared an affinity for similar national schools and time periods. Four prints in Reed's collection however do not fit that mold: two portraits of Napolean after Gerard, by Pradier and by Desnayers, and *Descent from the Cross* and *Apollo* after Anton Raphael Mengs (the former print engraved by Giovanni Volpato and the latter by Raffaelo Morghen). (First Annual Meeting Report, New York Gallery, January 4, 1845. *New-York Gallery of the Fine Arts Agreement and Catalogue 1858,* Collection New-York Historical Society, New York, NY.)

to have influenced King's original genre paintings *Itinerant Artist* and *Interior of a Ropewalk* **(Figure 78)** as well as his literary scene *Rip van Winkle Returning from a Morning's Lounge*. The absence of modern material is suggestive if not conclusive that King acquired the majority of his print collection early in his career, and probably in London.

Many patterns emerge from the diverse body of material King collected. He owned a large quantity of portrait prints, primarily by artists who worked in England (Sirs Anthony van Dyck, Godfrey Kneller, and Peter Lely) in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries as well as by late-eighteenth-century British painters (especially Sir Joshua Reynolds and George Romney). He owned hundreds of landscape prints, again including many scenes of England, but also a series after Claude Lorrain and myriad Netherlandish scenes. Religious and mythological subjects were plentiful as well. King collected numerous unattributed prints representing classical statuary and scenes imagining ancient life. He collected several series of animal prints, including lions after Charles le Brun and Rembrandt and cows and goats after seventeenth-century Dutch painters Paul Potter and Nicolaes Berghem. He owned twenty-five plates demonstrating sailing vessel designs. Finally, he collected imagery of ancient and exotic costume, and heraldic reference material including numerous plates of coats of arms and funerary images of knights from church monuments. These latter categories – the animal subjects, sailing vessels, classical sculptures and images of ancient life, costume, and heraldic imagery – do not relate substantively to the composition of the Gallery of Paintings. Rather, at least at some point King considered branching into history painting, though there is no evidence he actually followed through on that aspiration. Costume prints did aid King in some of his original compositions, notably with *Costume: Time of Charlemagne*, but likely also with other, lost compositions. Nonetheless, the sheer

volume of this type of visual material, in conjunction with the various classical scenes and heraldic imagery, suggest that King, probably early in his career, aspired to produce more complex historical compositions.

The most significant insight the print collection provides into Charles Bird King's approach to painting is the strength of his ties to British academic tradition, and in particular to the work and theories of Sir Joshua Reynolds. Reynolds, who died in 1792, continued through his writings to influence artists into the nineteenth century, and King as an academically trained portraitist was well versed in Reynolds' dicta. King's exposure to Reynolds' theories can be documented concretely from his copy of Edmond Malone's three-volume *Works of Sir Joshua Reynolds* (1798), which he gave to the Redwood Library, as well as practically through the choices he made in the construction of his Gallery.[180]

Both artists were collectors. Reynolds early in his career collected both prints and paintings; by the time of his death over one thousand paintings by other artists were or had been in his collection. He owned thousands of prints and drawings as well.[181] King collected prints in similar numbers to Reynolds' painting collection.[182] Reynolds as a collector of paintings and King as a collector of prints showed a similarity in taste. In a survey of paintings Reynolds is known to have collected, the vast majority of the

[180] This book contained not only Reynolds' *Discourses,* but his account of his trip to Flanders and Holland, and his commentary on Charles du Fresnoy's *Art of Painting.* It was among the volumes the Redwood Library received in 1862 from the King bequest.

[181] Francis Broun, "Sir Joshua Reynolds' Collection of Paintings," (Ph.D. Dissertation, Princeton University, 1987) I, 9.

[182] Reynolds' acquisition of such a substantial collection of paintings highlights fundamental differences in access and wealth; King, from the United States, had limited access to high-quality European paintings, other than through an agent in London, perhaps one reason he chose not to purchase paintings. Even had he chosen that route, however, King did not have Reynolds' purchasing power. Reynolds' estate was valued at in excess of 115,000 pounds before the sale of his extensive art collection. By way of contrast, at the end of his life King had assets amounting to $38,000. He lived comfortably, but not extravagantly, and neither his location nor his means allowed him to compete with a collector like Reynolds. Moses Foster Sweetser, *Sir Joshua* Reynolds (Boston: Houghton, Osgood and Company, 1878) 161-162.

identifiable artists were either Italian (338, 30.9%) or Dutch/Flemish (303, 27.6%). These percentages would have been even higher had not almost a third of the works been unattributable to any specific artist or school. In comparison, King owned 94 Italian, 179 British, and 141 Netherlandish prints. He collected 34 portraits after Reynolds alone. Of King's Netherlandish prints, relatively few were Dutch genre scenes, despite his own production of scenes of American everyday life. As previously noted, he owned no prints after Sir David Wilkie, with whom his work repeatedly has been compared. King's reluctance to collect these categories of prints, despite his own original compositions and copies after Dutch genre paintings, is consistent with Reynolds' belief that Dutch genre scenes were worthy of only qualified praise, as none engage with the "universal presiding idea of the art" found in History painting.[183]

In some cases, both King's painted copy and the print from which it was taken have survived. This is true of a recently rediscovered portrait of Count Hendrik van den Bergh after Sir Anthony Van Dyck **(Figure 12)**. The engraving by Paulus Pontius was among the collection of prints King gave to the Redwood Library **(Figure 13)**. The painting entered the Library's collection as "Head after Van Dyck" with the 1862 bequest, and may provide clues as to King's approach to the portraits he copied. Unlike the engraving, which is three-quarter length and shows a swirling canopy as well as a mountainous background, King's version is bust-length and merely hints at Van Dyck's background features. Van den Bergh's facial structure, expression, gaze, and his clothing

[183] Reynolds continued, "The painters who have applied themselves more particularly to low and vulgar characters, and who express with precision the various shades of passion, as they are exhibited by vulgar minds, (such as we see in the works of Hogarth,) deserve great praise; but as their genius has been employed on low and confined subjects, the praise which we give must be as limited as its object. The merry-making, or quarrelling, of the Boors of Teniers; the same sort of productions of Brouwer, or Ostade, are excellent in their kind; and the excellence and its praise will be in proportion, as, in those limited subjects, and peculiar forms, they introduce more or less of the expression of those passions, as they appear in general and more enlarged nature." Sir Joshua Reynolds, *Discourse III*, 51.

are all however accurate in their details. In the case of the *Calmady Children* after Sir Thomas Lawrence, King was far more accurate to the details of the painting, which focuses on the two children almost exclusively in the original **(Figures 14 & 15)**. King's painting does not however show the same level of finish and volume in the girls' anatomy; the copy is a bit flat and the children's expressions are not as joyful.

In other instances, prints in the Redwood collection provide a glimpse of paintings that have been lost. This is true of several of the paintings King copied after Reynolds, including *Gipsey Boy, The Fortune Teller, Strawberry Girl,* and *Infant St. John,* all of which are in the print collection **(Figures 16, 17, 18, & 19)**. Other prints that have survived where the painted copies have not include *Sigismunda and the Heart of the Lover* after Correggio, *Earl of Warwick* after Van Dyck, and a cartoon of *Elymas, The Sorcerer* after Raphael **(Figures 20, 21, & 22)**.

Constructing a Gallery of Paintings for the United States

By interspersing copies after European artists with his own original compositions, Charles Bird King integrated his work with the schools and styles of European art history popular during his years in London. He contextualized his portraits of prominent Americans with imagery after great European portraitists – a Giorgione "head," three van Dyck portraits, and heads of artists themselves in copies of Rembrandt and Sir Joshua Reynolds' self-portraits.[184] He mixed his original paintings of children such as *Grandfather's Hobby* **(Figure 23)** with other paintings of children, most notably five after Reynolds, but also two paintings listed as "After a Cast" – *Girl at the Brook* and

[184] The Sir Anthony Van Dyck portraits were *Earl of Warwick* (104), *Head* (157), and *Earl of Pembroke* (33). King copied cat. no. 157 from a print of Hendrick van den Berghe engraved by Paulus Pontius after Van Dyck that was in King's print collection (II, 15). Reynolds produced many self-portraits. It is not known which one King copied.

Child and Dog – as well as a *Girl and Kitten* "from an engraving."[185] King also copied landscape scenes, such as *Vue Prise en Savoie* after Villeneuve **(Figure 24)**. This painting is of additional interest because it did not enter the Redwood Library collection. King presented it as a gift to a Mrs. George Packer in November, 1861, but it conforms to the pattern of other copies in the Gallery in that its source can be found in King's extensive print collection and it provides evidence that King gave more than just portraits away to friends and family.[186]

Of the copies that came to the Redwood with artist identification, nine were Dutch or Flemish and twelve Italian. King copied nine British paintings, primarily portraits but also *Ceyx and Alcyone* after Richard Wilson and *Telemacus on the Isle of Calypso* after Benjamin West **(Figures 25 & 26)**. These numbers, much like the composition of the print collection, support the argument that King held a similar attitude towards the art historical canon as that of Sir Joshua Reynolds (King copied six paintings after Reynolds alone) and other academically trained British artists. That is, even though King had an interest in Dutch painting, particularly genre and trompe l'oeil, he respected the hierarchy that placed history painting at the summit of the genres and embraced the grand manner tradition in portraiture. The largest painting in the Gallery's permanent collection was King's copy of a portion of *The Rich Man's Feast* after Bonifazio Veronese

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[185] *The Fortune Teller, Infant St. John, Lord Crewe, in the Costume of Henry VIII,* and *The Hon. G. Seymour Conway* all were copies after Reynolds' portraits of upper-class children in costume. Only *Lord Crewe* is not represented by a print in King's collection. He likely copied the painting, or a print after it, while he was studying in London. He first exhibited his copy in Philadelphia in 1813. It was No. 48, "Lord Crew, when a child, in the character of Henry VIII. from Sir J. Reynolds." "Review concluded of the third annual exhibition of the Columbian Society of Artists and the Pennsylvania Academy," *The Monthly Recorder, A Magazine* I, 3 (June 1813) 177.

[186] It is impossible to say how many other paintings left the collection as gifts, though Watterston's estimate of 260 paintings exposes a gap of at least 50 works that did not find their way to the Redwood. Correspondence between Andrew Cosentino and Sotheby's, August 4, 1983. File courtesy Andrew Cosentino.

(approximately 75 x 40 in.).[187] Along with King's copies after West and Wilson, this painting joined *Venus Endeavoring to Prevent Adonis from Going to the Chase, on the Day He was Killed by Mars* after Titian as large history paintings anchoring the collection.[188] Other paintings after Guido Reni (*Mary Magdalene),* Correggio (*Sigismunda and the Heart of the Lover*), Raphael (*Elymas, the Sorcerer* and *Madonna della Seggiola*), and Michelangelo (*Jeremiah*) reinforced British artists' stylistic debt to Italian masters. Only two French copies are listed in the collection. Both were after Claude Lorrain and had no connection to the neoclassical style espoused by American artists and museum proprietors Rembrandt Peale and John Vanderlyn.[189]

The paintings we can track either because they have survived or because the corresponding print remains in the Redwood collection help us to understand the many paintings that the Redwood accessioned without attribution. Titles such as *Butterfly in a storm, Child at Prayer, Two Young Ladies and their Dead Bird,* and *"Oh! tis so Cold!" Woman Putting a Child into a Bath* all conjure images consistent with the copies of Reynolds' portraits of families and of children, and of the many prints after George Romney in the collection. *Joseph (and Mrs. Potiphar), Mary Magdalen,* and *Daughter of Jephthah* may have been copies, though no direct reference has surfaced within the print collection, or they may have been inspired by the many prints after history paintings in the collection.

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[187] When the painting entered the Redwood Library collection in 1862, if came in under the name *The Concert…Forming part of the Painting Called the Rich Man's Feast.* Redwood Library accessions records, December 11, 1862.

[188] Next to King's copy of *Rich Man's Feast,* he produced eight paintings that were approximately 3 ½ x 4 ½ feet in size. They were the copies after West, Wilson, and Titian along with five original compositions: *Itinerant Artist* (c. 1825); *Rip Van Winkle Returning from a Morning's Lounge* (c. 1825); *Interior of a Ropewalk* (c. 1840); *"I Will Be a Soldier." Little Child with Sword and Gun, and Old Man with Wooden Leg* (n.d.); and *Bust of Dead Mother. Two Young Ladies and Little Boy Contemplating It* (n.d.).

[189] The 1885 *Catalogue* identifies the paintings as *River Po* (cat. no. 2.) and *The Marriage Festival of Isaac and Rebecca; or 'La Molina'* (cat. no. 70).

Copies, as by now is clear, were critical components of Charles Bird King's Gallery. Indeed, the development of the visual arts in the early United States, both in taste and in form, was dependent on the European copy. As we have seen, John Smibert introduced patrons and artists alike to European masterworks through the copies he brought to Boston in the eighteenth century. As time passed, more Americans traveled to Europe and came into contact with originals, but the copy remained a reputable manner of bringing the experience of the original home. Artists into the nineteenth century often financed at least a portion of their study abroad through commissions from wealthy American patrons for copies, furthering their studies and providing their patrons with imagery at the same time.[190] Thomas Sully, even after three decades as a professional artist, used commissions for copies after portraits by Sir Joshua Reynolds to finance a trip he made to England to paint the young *Queen Victoria*.[191]

Through his copies, King provided his visitors with a platform for understanding both Western art historical tradition and the space American art could occupy within it. King's professional background prepared him to develop a paradigm heavily influenced by British academic tradition. King's work falls within a trajectory that draws from the

[190] Patrons flattered themselves that they shaped their protégés' education while they simultaneously acquired copies of specific works of art for display. In a letter to George Flagg, whose European education he financed, Luman Reed wrote: "In your next letter you must let me know the subject you are painting. I want you to copy the likeness of Claude in the Louvre, I want the portrait to hang up. I also want you to make for me drawings in Crayon of three of the best antique statues in the Louvre…." Luman Reed to George Flagg, New York, March 9, 1835, Asher B. Durand Papers, New York Public Library Collection.

[191] Though Sully's intent in traveling to London was to paint the young Queen Victoria, exhibiting this state portrait would not immediately cover his expenses, which he financed through a payment of $1,000 from four Philadelphia gentlemen, for whom he promised to produce paintings individually valued at $300. On September 26, 1837 Sully noted: "Mr. Carey, Jr., has agreed to pay Mrs. Sully during my absence $1000 in monthly payments of $100, beginning the first of November – Henry Carey, Rockhill, Vander Kemp, and J.K. Kane, have each given me an order for a $300 picture to be painted as, and when I choose;…" While in London, Sully executed portraits of British subjects, but also painted several copies after Reynolds – his *Sleeping Girl, Girl and Bird, Strawberry Girl,* and an unidentified portrait. On September 27, 1838, Sully noted: "Dined with Mr. Biddle. The copies I have made in London for H. Carey, Vanderkemp and JK King were approved by them." These entries, as well as the references to the copies after Reynolds, appear in Thomas Sully's *Journal,* 120, 189, 140-170.

Renaissance, Northern Baroque, eighteenth-century French and eighteenth and nineteenth-century British traditions. His copies both replicated the compositions of earlier masters, and reinvented them through his own imposition of style (particularly in the context of prints he copied) and in the array of imagery he assembled for his viewers. One cannot understand the particular aesthetic construct King developed without noting the effect of the exhibition in its totality. In the Gallery the hybridization, already evident in King's choices of works to copy, took shape. King's original subject paintings must be understood in the context of eighteenth and nineteenth-century aesthetic theory of invention as the reassembly of known motifs to instigate new practice. King's original paintings drew their vocabulary from European precedent, from the copies he displayed on his walls. And yet those copies spoke a new and specifically American language within their transformed context.

CONCLUSION

This study ends in 1861 when Charles Bird King completely disassembled his Gallery due to failing health; however, the outbreak of the Civil War forms a dividing line more generally for the development of art collections in the United States. A new type of collection would materialize in the 1870s, one founded either on private collections made public, such the Corcoran Gallery of Art (construction commenced in 1859; the collection formally opened to the public in 1874); or from groundswells of public support such as that for the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (founded 1870; opened to the public 1876) and the Metropolitan Museum of Art (founded 1870; opened to the public 1872).[192] These new collections were an outgrowth of Americans' desire to

[192] The Wadsworth Athenaeum was the earliest art museum of this type, established in 1844. Though it presaged later developments, and was technically open to the public, its founders were more interested in artists' education than in the education and entertainment of casual visitors. Their hours were restricted,

promote a sense of local identity, either through individual munificence or broad-based community support, in the wake of the wrenching dislocation caused by the Civil War. They were indeed museums due to their diversity of subjects, styles, and artists and they permanently changed the landscape for viewing art in the United States.

The diversity of offerings King placed on view in his Gallery of Paintings presaged the generalist approach of post-Civil War American art museums. The didactic potential of the collection mirrored the experience a visitor today can have at a public art museum, though King's visitors' opportunities existed in a far narrower range. King's Gallery also performed a public role in Washington, D.C., despite being a private enterprise. It was a landmark in Washington for decades and, for most of that time, the only permanent venue devoted to the visual arts. The Gallery was so well known that *National Intelligencer* advertisements used it as a landmark into the 1860s to orient potential customers to nearby real estate rentals and auctioneers' headquarters.

King's location defined the type of viewer he reached as well – local Washington residents, but also the many visitors who came to the city from all parts of the country. Regionally and politically, King's audience was more diverse than that of other venues because of the Gallery's location, and politics played a larger role in all elements of cultural life beginning in the early 1830s with the increasing sectional divide. King's work as a result took on a political cast that was far more acute than it would have been had he established his Gallery elsewhere.

The chapters that follow delve into King's original paintings to demonstrate exactly how he contributed an American visual vocabulary to public discourse in the fine arts through the intersection of his compositions and the many copies he displayed

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8:00AM to 12:00 noon and 1:00 to 6:00PM with no evening or weekend hours, practically ensuring that only gentlemen and women would be able to attend. Orosz, *Curators and Culture,* 149, 154-155.

alongside them. The paintings that are the focus of each chapter were part of the Gallery; many were conceived specifically to find their place within that setting. Much of this chapter has been devoted to establishing the similarities between King's collection and other visual offerings in nineteenth-century America. Though King's Gallery shared characteristics with other earlier and contemporary venues, he was unique in working in Washington, D.C. And because of the degree to which we can document the contents of the collection, relative to other galleries, King's Gallery will reorient our understanding of the important role European paintings and styles continued to play in the United States into the second half of the nineteenth century.

Chapter Two – "Living Likenesses": Portraits for King's Gallery of Paintings[1]

Portraiture figured importantly in every phase of Charles Bird King's career. Over seventy-five percent of his known works were portraits and almost all of his commissioned work was for portraits.[2] However, at least initially King thought of himself as much more than a portraitist. He represented himself as a "Historical and Portrait Painter" at the 1817 and 1818 Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts (PAFA) Annual Exhibitions. This description did not encapsulate the full range of King's interests, which by this time included still life and trompe l'oeil, but nevertheless it testified to his desire to be known as more than simply a portraitist. King's ambitions were hardly unique. Many American painters of his generation aspired to work in multiple categories only to remain restricted financially to portraiture. They were not alone. Even British artist (and first President of the Royal Academy) Sir Joshua Reynolds wrote about the nobility of history painting while primarily working as a portraitist. Whether by happenstance or by design, King followed Reynolds' own self-assessment in identifying himself as a "Historical and Portrait Painter," the very same terms Reynolds supplied for his entry in the 1763 London *Universal Director*.[3] Of all

[1] Quote refers to King's Gallery in the context of a review of Thomas Sully's Portrait of *Queen Victoria*, on view at that time at the Gallery: "Some of his pieces are exquisitely executed, and all his portraits are living likenesses." W., "Sully's Portrait of Victoria and King's Gallery," *National Intelligencer* (July 13, 1840).

[2] I base this statistic on Andrew Cosentino's 1977 catalogue of King's known works. The number includes the multiple versions King is known to have painted of some portraits, as well as the few instances where he painted multiple versions of the same subject pictures. While the statistic is not perfect, the overwhelming majority of portraits within his *oeuvre* speak to the importance of that genre to King's career. Andrew J. Cosentino, *The Paintings of Charles Bird King (1785-1862)* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press for the National Collection of Fine Arts, 1977) 121-203.

[3] "Reynolds. Joshua, History and Portrait Painter, Leicester Square." It is significant to note that Reynolds chose this description in the wake of completing his first historical portrait, *Garrick between Tragedy and Comedy* (1762), but another decade would pass before he produced his first traditional history painting, *Ugolino and his Children in the Dungeon* (1773).

European masters, Reynolds' example played the most important role in King's development as a portraitist. King copied numerous portraits after Reynolds and owned prints after many more. King's portraits of men conformed to nineteenth-century norms; mostly bust or half-length compositions, they focused on character as expressed through the countenance; the half-length compositions featured papers or books to contextualize the sitter's profession and intellect. In his portrayal of women and children by contrast, King followed Reynolds' example by frequently blurring the boundaries between formal portraiture and the fancy piece.[4] A fancy piece defies identification of the sitter. Though the artist would employ a model, the resulting painting was not intended to be a portrait, but rather to evoke literary or sentimental themes. Reynolds often brought elements of the fancy piece into his commissioned portraits, sometimes with grandiose results, such as *Mrs. Siddons as the Tragic Muse* (1784) and *Lady Sarah Bunbury Sacrificing to the Graces* (1763-1765). Often the only way to distinguish between some of King's portraits of women and fancy pieces is through their titles; those that refer to a person are portraits, while the others are fancy pieces. Otherwise the sitters' beauty and their accoutrements overwhelm their portraits' physiognomic similitude as signifiers of likeness.

Though King produced and displayed paintings in a wide variety of genres over the course of his lifetime, his professional training and early career were primarily in portraiture. King produced his earliest known painting, a portrait of his cousin *Dr. David King I*, prior to his 1806 departure to study in England. While in England, King copied at least two portraits, *John Hunter* and *Lord Crewe in the Character of Henry VIII*, both after Sir Joshua Reynolds **(Figures 27 & 28)**.[5] King held his copy of *Lord Crewe* in high

[4] Martin Postle has written the most comprehensive study of Reynolds' fancy pieces. Martin Postle, *Sir Joshua Reynolds: The Subject Pictures* (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

[5] Unfortunately both paintings are now lost. Charles Robert Leslie, *Autobiographical Recollections* (Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1860) 51, notes that students used to copy Reynolds' *Hunter* in the collections of the British Institution. Cited by Cosentino, *Paintings of Charles Bird King*, 136.

regard; he submitted it to the PAFA 1813 Annual Exhibition and kept it in his collection until the end of his life.[6] In the years following his return to the United States, King painted portraits across the eastern seaboard until he settled permanently in Washington, D.C in 1819. Indeed, portrait commissions drew King to Washington initially. Joseph Delaplaine, an entrepreneurial Philadelphia publisher, commissioned King to produce paintings for his multi-volume *Repository of the Lives and Portraits of Distinguished Americans*, as well as for a National Panzographia for the Reception of the Portraits of Distinguished Americans, a for-profit national gallery of portraits Delaplaine ran in Philadelphia from 1819 to 1823.[7]

When King opened his Gallery of Paintings in 1824, portraits made up a large portion of the images on display, though they were underrepresented relative to their prominence in his oeuvre overall.[8] If over 75% of his known paintings were portraits, only 50% of the Gallery paintings were portraits. These included original compositions, copies after Gilbert Stuart and after European Masters, and a number of paintings that blurred the line between portraiture and sentimental genre and fancy pieces.[9]

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[6] *Lord Crewe in Costume of Henry VIII* formed part of the 1862 Redwood Library bequest (No. 24). George C. Mason, *Annals of the Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, R.I.* (Newport, R.I.: Redwood Library, 1891) 234.

[7] Andrew Cosentino writes that Delaplaine commissioned eight of the sixteen portraits King painted in Washington between October 1818 and March, 1819. Cosentino, *The Paintings of Charles Bird King*, 37. Delaplaine states in the prospectus for his Panzographia that he already had received over 200 portraits, and that artists were working on more. *Prospectus of Delaplaine's National Panzographia, for the Reception of the Portraits of Distinguished Americans* (Philadelphia: Printed by William Brown, 1818) 15.

[8] Many thanks to Andy Cosentino for sharing his files with me. Neither King's will nor the inventory of the estate can be found within the Washington, D.C. archival system, though they were available to Cosentino when he was doing his research in the 1970s.

[9] 195 paintings are listed in the inventory of Charles Bird King's home and studio, dated May 23, 1862. Of these, seventy-five had already been selected by the Redwood Library, categorized as: 19 Portraits, 8 Indian Portraits, 14 Landscapes, 34 Fancy & Miscelaneous [*sic*]. For the purposes of the inventory, they were valued at $1,500, or $20/painting. Aside from the seventy-five paintings King bequeathed to the Redwood Library, he designated recipients for many other paintings from the collection. In a few cases, his will specifies that he gives a recipient "her own portrait," but in most instances the subject of the painting is not listed. King numbered the paintings in his collection on their backs in order to identify for whom they were designated.

This chapter looks at the way in which King's integration of portraits into his overall display reflected on the portraits, on American national identity as constructed through the portraits subjects he displayed, and on the way that King's British training colored the makeup of the collection. The Gallery display suggests that King was more interested in defining his place within Western artistic tradition than in producing a national gallery-style collection of portraits. Though this may have been King's didactic intent, his viewers brought their own insights to their viewing of the portraits. The decades during which the Picture Gallery was open saw a dramatic rise in interest in biography in the United States and a corresponding interest in how physical appearance reflected character. Many of King's visitors were familiar with the theories of physiognomy (popular during the early nineteenth-century) and phrenology (from the 1830s onward) and the extent to which the portraits do or do not conform to those theories also influenced visitors' attitudes towards his subjects.

PORTRAITS FOR THE GALLERY

The portraits King produced for the Gallery of Paintings encompassed prominent Washington and other regional politicians and men and women of society; copies of the works of other painters such as Sir Anthony Van Dyck, Sir Joshua Reynolds, and Gilbert Stuart; fancy pieces that blurred the line with portraiture; and over a dozen portraits of American Indians, an outgrowth of a monumental and unique commission from the United States government. By combining portraits of American Indians, politicians, and leading men of commerce and women of society in Washington, D.C., King constructed a national identity for the United States. The fancy pieces served as a bridge between the portraits, copies after old masters, and other painting genres within the collection.

King's Gallery of Paintings was an outlet for the production of works for which he never was able to create a patronage market; this is no less the case for the portraits than for the other genres of paintings he displayed. King held on to all of the copies after European masters that he exhibited early in his career and displayed them and more in his Gallery. King may have produced at least some of his portrait copies as training exercises, but he copied and displayed enough of them that their inclusion was purposeful. From a financial standpoint, the Gallery provided King the opportunity to reap an economic benefit from paintings for which there was no ready market – copies that may in part have been training exercises, and fancy pieces. However, King's copies provided examples of other historical and modern artists' styles and encouraged viewers to reflect on the way he incorporated classical conventions into his portraits of Americans.

The manner in which King integrated portraiture into his Gallery separated him from the offerings of two well-publicized Philadelphians, Joseph Delaplaine and Charles Willson Peale. Both Peale and Delaplaine consciously formed collections of "worthies" (Peale's term for his subjects) in Philadelphia, and both aspired to national gallery status for their collections. In Peale's Philadelphia Museum, portraits looked down upon visitors from a hanging position above the lower orders of natural beings, preserved and stuffed birds and mammals displayed in glass cases. Peale's worthies, predominantly white men, were only one class of specimen within the Linnaean construction of his museum.[10] He marketed the collection as an Enlightenment cabinet of curiosities and believed that the mechanism of the Linnaean system allowed him to provide his visitors

[10] Artist Angelika Kauffman was the only woman who hung on the line with the men and Joseph Brant/Thaendagea was the only American Indian.

with a republican education.[11] While Peale's museum contained a few paintings that did not fit into his display of worthies, he did not integrate all of his paintings into a single visual arts gallery in the manner of King's Gallery and these works stood out as individual achievements. Two of the more remarked-upon paintings, both of which included portraits but were much more than portraits, exemplify the way in which Peale's larger painting collection did not coalesce into a picture gallery. *Mrs. Peale Lamenting the Death of Her Child (Rachel Weeping)* (1776; revised 1818) was both an exceedingly personal evocation of Peale's grief at the loss of a child as well as a spectacle **(Figure 29)**. Peale placed a curtain in front of the canvas ostensibly to protect the sensitive, but the curtain had the added effect of increasing the drama and anticipation by hiding the subject from view. The personal nature of the image as well as its isolation from other images in its display (Peale placed it at the end of an aisle and not with other paintings) forced the image to stand alone. *Exhumation of the Mastodon* (1806) formed a part of the exhibition of the mastodon skeleton at the museum **(Figure 30)**. The painting illustrated the dramatic excavation of the skeleton from the marl pit in which it was found near Montgomery, New York. It celebrated the ingenuity and sheer strength the removal of the bones required, and in the process placed the extended Peale family, those both present at the site and not, at the forefront of scientific inquiry in the United States. Peale displayed it alongside the actual skeleton so that they played off one another. In King's Gallery, *Exhumation of the Mastadon* would have blended the categories of history and genre painting but would have been integrated into the overall painting collection, where in the Philadelphia Museum it was partitioned off with the skeleton itself and became

[11] Cf. chapter 1, p. 54, for Philadelphia Museum 1818 broadside in which Peale emphasizes the wide-ranging scope of the collection. By this point, portraits (180) made up only a small portion of the overall collection (8,000 objects).

more of an illustration of the event and a celebration of the Peales and of natural science, not an image intended to stand visually on its own.

Joseph Delaplaine was a Philadelphia publisher and entrepreneur who embarked in the 1810s on an ambitious project to document both visually and textually the lives of prominent men associated with the discovery of America as well as with the American Revolution. He initiated a series of volumes of biographies titled the *Repository of the Lives and Portraits of Distinguished American Characters (1815-1816).* Between 1815 and 1817 Delaplaine published three volumes of what was intended to be a continuing series of biographies, but subscriber support for the expensive venture lagged and no further volumes appeared. His portrait gallery, Delaplaine's National Panzographia for the Reception of the Portraits of Distinguished Americans, was an outgrowth of the *Repository*, for he acquired all of the portraits he commissioned for the book. Delaplaine only displayed portraits (no natural curiosities) in his Gallery and expected Americans' sense of patriotism and their admiration for national political leaders to spark visitor interest and thereby to finance his endeavor, ultimately a failed strategy.[12] Though King displayed many portraits, visitors who described their visits listed portraits in a manner that suggested that those works were integrated in the display with other types of paintings. This integration separated King's Gallery from Peale and Delaplaine's, as both of their painting collections were made up almost exclusively of portraits. The types of people King portrayed further distanced his Gallery. Many of the men and women King portrayed led remarkable lives, but his collection did not develop into a coherent statement regarding national or international greatness of character. Rather it coalesced into a more diverse picture of American culture; well-known and lesser-known white

[12] Delaplaine opened his National Panzographia in 1819, but closed it insolvent in 1823.

men and women shared wall space with portraits of American Indians, and all of the portraits were interspersed among European portrait copies and European-inspired fancy pieces, landscapes, original genre scenes, and trompe l'oeils.

HEROES OF THE NATION, MEN AND WOMEN OF WASHINGTON, AND FANCY PIECES

King painted the majority of the portraits of Anglo-Americans in the Gallery specifically for display and not as outgrowths of other commissions. Though King's collection of characters may appear haphazard and eclectic, it was in fact considered. Rather than take advantage of private commissions by producing copies for the Gallery, most of the portraits he displayed were unique compositions. King's displays emphasized a different type of education from that of other portrait collections. By his manner of integrating portraits with other painting genres rather than hanging all of the portraits together, he instructed visitors in the visual arts, not politics. The competing narratives generated from the interspersed genre, history, still life, and trompe l'oeil paintings (both originals and copies) tempered the collection's underlying nationalist message. The display provided viewers the opportunity to focus on individual works, both their subjects and their styles, and as a result rendered the composition of the portrait collection a subtle force for the construction of national identity.

King's approach to building his collection in the years following the Gallery's 1824 opening emphasizes the differences between his conception and those of Peale and Delaplaine. Peale actively solicited sittings from prominent men, both Americans and Europeans, throughout the years he ran his Philadelphia Museum.[13] Delaplaine attempted

[13] Charles Willson Peale, for instance, sent his son Rembrandt to Paris in 1808 with a wish list for portraits of famous French men. Rembrandt convinced eight to sit to him while he was there. These included the sculptor Jean-Antoine Houdon; the Director of the Musée Central des Arts, Baron Dominique Vivant Denon; the United States Minister to France, General John Armstrong; the novelist Jacques Henri Bernardin de Saint-Pierre; and the scientists Antoine Francois de Fourçroy, Abbé Réné Just Hauy, Georges

to assemble a comprehensive pantheon of American greatness from the Revolutionary to the contemporary period.[14] In contrast, a study of the portraits King produced for the Gallery reveals interest in some prominent American historical figures, but only a fleeting interest in contemporary political leaders. In fact John Quincy Adams, elected in 1824 coincident to the opening of the Gallery, was the last United States President King painted **(Figure 31)**.[15] Very quickly, then, but particularly by the 1830s, King's portrait displays took on a more historical cast. Many of the men and women King painted in the 1810s and 1820s remained politically and socially prominent as time passed: Dolly Madison was a fixture in Washington until her death in 1849; John Quincy Adams embarked on a second political life when he joined the House of Representatives in 1832; and John C. Calhoun and Henry Clay remained prominent political figures through the 1830s **(Figures 32 & 42)**. However, King painted all of these subjects when they physically were in their primes; and one could argue of Calhoun, Clay, and Adams, all up for the presidency in 1824, that their later careers did not equal their popularity and success in the 1820s. In Calhoun's case, though, the issue was complicated by the Nullification Crisis, as a result of which he became both a hero to Southerners and a villain to Northerners in the early 1830s.

Cuvier, and Sir Benjamin Thompson (Count Rumford). William T. Oedel, "After Paris: Rembrandt Peale's Apollodorian Gallery," *Winterthur Portfolio* XXVII, 1 (Spring, 1992) 3. [1-27]

[14] Delaplaine intended for his *Repository for the Lives of Distinguished Americans* to continue indefinitely as a chronicle to continuous American achievement. Gordon M. Marshall, "The Golden Age of Illustrated Biographies: Three Case Studies," in Wendy Wick Reaves, ed., *American Portrait Prints: Proceedings of the Tenth Annual American Print Conference* (Charlottesville: Published for the National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, by the University Press of Virginia, 1984) 44.

[15] King painted, or copied, portraits of each of the first six United States Presidents, though he only painted one portrait of James Monroe and it may never have hung in the Gallery. King's portrait exhibited at the PAFA 1817 Annual Exhibition, and Thomas Sully noted that he exhibited the painting in his Gallery in 1828. Based on Sully's notation, it appears that the painting by that point had entered the collection of a Mr. Morgan. Thomas Sully "Journal," March 16, 1828.

The portraits King chose to copy after Gilbert Stuart provided him with images of some of the most recognizable figures of the American Revolutionary and Early Republic periods. These included *John Adams* **(Figure 33)**, *General Henry Lee, Thomas Jefferson* **(Figure 34)**, *John Madison, Dolly Madison*, and *George Washington* (rectangular and oval compositions).[16] *Mrs. Delia Stewart*, wife of Admiral Charles Stewart, was the exception, a woman both beautiful and scandalous **(Figure 35)**. The Stewart marriage ended disastrously in divorce in 1829 amidst rumors of her adultery and as a result of her prohibitively extravagant taste for European high society.[17] King's inclusion of *Mrs. Delia Stewart* suggests that the artist's desire for copies after Stuart were not only, and possibly not even primarily, public-minded. King's interest in copying Delia Stewart's portrait appears to have been more aesthetic – her beauty, the virtuosity of Stuart's execution, or perhaps both. All of King's copies replicate Stuart's recognizable brushwork, and considering the older artist's enduring popularity well into the nineteenth century (he died in 1828), King's primary motivation may have been to be able to say that he had paintings by Stuart (albeit copies) on display in the Gallery.

Portraits of women made up only a small percentage of the portraits in the Gallery. King left just twelve portraits of women to the Redwood Library – including his copy of Rembrandt's painting of his mother, two copies after Stuart, and two portraits of American Indian women – by contrast to the twenty-seven original portraits of Anglo men alone that King gave the Redwood. When we include the many copies after Stuart and European masters, along with the nineteen portraits of American-Indian men, the

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[16] The Redwood Library's records list two paintings of *John Adams* (but the portrait of Adams in middle age likely was after Robert Field) as well as portraits after Gen. Henry Lee, Thomas Jefferson, John and Dolly Madison, Mrs. Delia Tudor Stewart, and Washington (a rectangular as well as an oval composition). For full citation and provenance information on all of these paintings, see Cosentino, *The Paintings of Charles Bird King*, "Catalogue of Known Works."

[17] Claude G. Berube, *A Call to the Sea: Captain Charles Stewart of the USS Constitution* (Washington, D.C.: Potomac Books, 2005) 102-104.

women represented an even smaller percentage of the whole.[18] Neither the subjects nor the compositions coalesce into patterns or groups. Several of the paintings are unlocated, including portraits of a Miss Semmes and of John Quincy Adams' granddaughter Fanny Adams. Another now-lost painting, *Miss Simple, now Sister Agnes, in a Convent,* may have been drawn from a nineteenth-century story or play or may have depicted a real person. Either way, it likely fell compositionally into the same category as other sentimental genre paintings in the collection, such as the also-lost *Girl Reading a Love Letter by Lamp-light* or *Girl Taking Food to a Prisoner*, both gifts from the artist to the Redwood Library in 1861. King displayed several portraits of beautiful young women, like his copy of Stuart's *Mrs. Delia Stewart.* He incorporated an unusual technique in his portrait of *Mrs. Joseph Lovel* to achieve the visually arresting effect of the loose silk veil that falls before her face and around the arms of her dark silk empire-waist dress **(Figure 36)**. For the design, King pressed actual lace onto the canvas that he dipped in paint. The lace consequently pops dramatically from the surface of the canvas, without obscuring Lovel's blonde hair, bound up in ringlets close to her face. King was known for playing with technical aids in his work; considering the level of finish of the painting, it is possible that the lace was a late addition and not part of the original compositional scheme.[19] If this was the case, it provides another example of King's use of his Gallery paintings for practice and experimentation. *Mrs. Stockton, of Virginia* is also a half-length portrait of a beautiful young woman with a lace veil, though in this case King

[18] The Redwood Library gift did not represent the entirety of King's portrait production for the Gallery, just as it did not for other categories of paintings. King made many gifts through his will, but as he only identified them by number and not by subject, it is impossible to reconstruct the entire collection.

[19] William Dunlap commented that King had developed "technical aids" in his work, and Thomas Sully noted in his journal different ways in which King experimented with oil paint. King's interest in experimentation seldom is apparent to the viewer, rendering this painting an interesting rarity.

painted the lace rather than press actual lace into paint **(Figure 37)**. Nor does Mrs. Stockton hide behind the veil; with her right hand she pulls it back from her face.

King's portrait of *Margaret Bayard (Mrs. Samuel Harrison) Smith* stands out from the majority of the Gallery portraits **(Figure 38)**. Neither beauty nor romanticism enters into King's portrayal, and the forcefulness of Smith's gaze and demeanor render her unique among King's portraits of women while her exotic attire sets her apart visually from the more sedately clad men. It was the product of a private commission to King (now lost) that the artist then copied for the Gallery. As such, we may assume that Smith was involved in the planning of the composition. Smith was a well-known author and a public figure both on her own account and because her husband was involved in local Washington politics.[20] She wielded great social power and was politically outspoken, particularly on matters of race and gender.[21] King painted Smith in 1829, towards the end of a decade that had found her very active. She published both of her novels in the 1820s, along with two children's stories, and finished another controversial novel manuscript titled "Lucy" that remained unpublished at her death. Smith's novels and children's stories fit into the sentimental genre, but they also tackled politically divisive subjects, in particular race relations and the social constraints placed upon women in

[20] Samuel Harrison Smith was an ardent Jeffersonian Republican and the Smiths first came to Washington in the wake of Jefferson's election to the presidency. Smith founded the *National Intelligencer* newspaper, the primary newspaper to cover Congress for decades, in 1800. After he sold the paper in 1810, he became involved in a variety of financial pursuits, including serving for a time as the Secretary of the Treasury under Madison, and President of the Bank of Washington. In the late 1820s he served on the board of the American Colonization Society. Margaret Bayard Smith, *The First Forty Years of Washington Society: Portrayed by the Family Letters of Mrs. Samuel Harrison Smith (Margaret Bayard)* (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1906), vi. Cassandra Good, "'A Transcript of My Heart': The Unpublished Diaries of Margaret Bayard Smith," *Washington History* (Fall/Winter 2005): 69.

[21] The Smiths were some of the earliest residents of Washington City, and early members of the social elite, a status they maintained well into the antebellum period. William E. Ames, *A History of the National Intelligencer* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1972) 3-36. Frederika Teute, "'A Wild, Desolate Place': Life on the Margins in Early Washington," in *Southern City, National Ambition: the Growth of Early Washington, D.C., 1800-1860* (Washington: George Washington University Center for Washington Area Studies in conjunction with the American Architectural Foundation, 1995) 47-102.

nineteenth-century Washington. "Lucy" chronicles the ruin of a farming family on the outskirts of Washington. Disaster results from the patriarch's anger at his daughter's accidental pregnancy by an indentured servant whom she intended to marry. Lucy, thrown out of her family home and separated from her lover, finds aid and support in a liminal African-American community that subsists in the swamps surrounding Washington. Smith's sister referred to the plot as "indelicate" and objectionable to polite society, joining a chorus of voices that discouraged Smith from publishing the novel.[22] Smith's first novel, *A Winter in Washington* (1824), however shows "Lucy" to be an extension of her other work and not an aberration. *A Winter in Washington* also takes as its subjects the racially poisonous atmosphere of the city and the dramatic poverty in which many Washingtonians lived. In this novel, Mrs. Seymour and her daughter Louisa visit the homes of several families in an attempt to understand the "real sufferings" of the poor. In the process, they become the ears and eyes for Smith's audience of Washington elites so similar to the Seymours. The most painful scene of poverty is that of a mixed-race family, "a tall, brawny, athletic looking mulatto man, a pale, thin white woman, and three or four mulatto children." The husband, Joseph, is to all appearances a good man. He married the white woman, Jenny, after her father turned her out of her home for becoming pregnant with an illegitimate child from another man. Jenny is anything but appreciative of Joseph's kindness and focuses entirely on her own fallen state and on her disgust that she has "bemeaned [her]self to marry such a neger."[23]

King's portrait of Smith communicates to the viewer the forcefulness of character that propelled her to take on complex and, to many in her class, "indelicate" social and

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[22] Teute, "'A Wilde, Desolate Place,'" 63.

[23] Margaret Bayard Smith, *A Winter in Washington, or, Memoirs of the Seymour Family* (New York: E. Bliss & E. White, 1824) I, 132.

cultural issues in her fiction. King may have displayed Smith's portrait in his Gallery in part because she was a well-known Washington figure, but she also was a close personal friend of the artist and his inclusion of her portrait celebrates that friendship while simultaneously advocating for her literary perspective. The effect King achieves in the portrait brings the viewer under Smith's powerful gaze. Smith looks out at the viewer frankly and draws him in through her focus as well as her proximity to the picture plane. She appears formidable, solidly filling the canvas in her fur-lined cloak and rich velvet dress. King does not shy away from her aging profile, recording her seemingly massive physique and the softening facial features of age such as the delicate wrinkles at the edges of both eyes, her high cheekbone disappearing under thickening flesh, and a hint of a double chin. However, he also captures Smith's bright intellect and a kindness of spirit through her expressive eyes and the hint of a smile at her mouth.

King's portrait of Smith illustrates the compositional differences between his commissioned work and the portraits he produced specifically for the Gallery. King's private commissions were frequently beautifully nuanced and complex compositions. In such works, King was more likely to contextualize his subjects through detailed clothing or accessories. Smith's headpiece is a case in point. This is the only time King painted a turban. Unusual though the accessory is, it is quite possible that King meant for Smith's turban and cloak to recall the banyan and cap that gentlemen intellectuals so frequently wore in eighteenth-century portraits, in order to reinforce her literary profession.[24] He paid close attention to the honeycomb structure of the ground of the lace, as well as to the

[24] For instance, *Nicholas Boylston* (1767) by John Singleton Copley, where the sitter sports a banyan and cap. Though the cap did not appear frequently, the banyan did. Jean-Baptiste Grueze painted *Benjamin Franklin* (1777) wearing a fur-lined banyan; Charles Willson Peale painted *Dr. Benjamin Rush* (c. 1783) and *David Rittenhouse* (c.1796) in banyans as well. Images of banyans with turbans were more unusual, though several prominent European intellectuals were painted with turbans. These included the French obstetrician *Alphonse Leroy* (1783) painted by Jacques-Louis David wearing a banyan and Indian-inspired turban and *Jean-Jacques Rousseau* (1766) painted by Alan Ramsay wearing a fur turban.

clothwork that catches the light across the outside edge. King was equally attentive to the structure of Smith's lace collar, though the execution is far more precise and less impressionistic, setting off his sitter's head and neck from her massive body, which he further emphasized through the dainty left hand that she reaches out from beneath the cloak. This arm rests on a red blocky surface, perhaps one of Smith's books. Because King's portrait of Smith was a private commission, it is unclear how much of the design to attribute to the artist and how much to the sitter, but either way the painting stands as one of King's most highly developed portraits.[25]

In contrast to his more elaborate private commissions, King may intentionally have simplified portrait compositions meant for the Gallery in order to distinguish them from fancy pieces on display. He painted numerous scenes of young women and children, such as *The Castle Builder* and *Costume, Time of Charlemagne* **(Figures 39 & 40).** Both of these paintings feature beautiful young women. In *The Castle Builder*, the woman sits in reverie, her left index finger lightly pressed to her chin; a book rests in her lap, facing away from her and towards the viewer, open to a story titled "Castle Builder." The title reflects on the woman's reverie, suggesting that she is dreaming, building castles in the air, a romantic poetic conceit employed by British, Scottish, and American poets in the nineteenth century.[26] On the table next to her is a package of letters, over which dangles a heart-shaped locket hanging from a chain. Behind her, a pile of books sits on a ledge next to a tall blue vase filled with flowers. These provide a counterpoint to the garland of fresh flowers that adorn her hair. *Costume, Time of Charlemagne* is

[25] Unfortunately the commissioned version of the painting is unlocated.

[26] King appears to have made up the title for the short story, but the idea of a child or a romantic dreamer building castles in the air recurs frequently in nineteenth-century literature. The Scottish writer James Ballentine wrote a ballad titled "Castles in the Air," British poet Thomas Love Peacock wrote a two-stanza poem titled "Castles in the Air," and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow included a poem about a young boy dreamer titled "The Castle-Builder" in *Birds of Passage.*

equally romantic, but its historicizing setting is more theatrical. The young woman wears medieval-style clothing and poses outside, an ambiguously wild background behind her. She places an urn filled with flowers inside a niche surmounted by a gothic arch. The exotic flowers she holds include a variegated-color-pattern tulip, which blurs the historical setting by tying the composition to seventeenth-century Dutch still-life painting.[27] It is more difficult to say, for other now-lost paintings, whether they may have been fancy pieces or genre paintings. The Redwood Library acquired from King several paintings that they listed as "costume" pieces. In addition to *Costume, Time of Charlemagne,* King gave them *French Costume in 1400* and *Costume of Female of Quality.* Other painting titles evoke fanciful childhood imagery: *Father's Joy and Mother's Glory; Child at Prayer; Pirate; The Young Dragoon; I Will be a Soldier; Mexican Girl; Blind Girl Reading; Two Young Ladies and their Dead Bird; School Girl, Writing;* and *A Sleeping Girl.* These paintings joined *Gipsey Boy* [sic] and *The Fortune Teller,* two fancy pieces of children after Reynolds that King hung in the Gallery **(Figures 16 & 17)**.[28] Other paintings, presumably of adults, may also have fit into this category: *Gambler, Bust of Dead Mother, Mother Praying over her Sleeping Child, The Maniac, Neglected Wife,* and *Sleeping Mother*.[29]

Beyond *Margaret Bayard [Mrs. Samuel Harrison] Smith,* several of King's other private portrait commissions demonstrate the difference between the generally simpler portraits on display in the Gallery, and the fancy pieces described above. As evident in these works, King frequently emphasized the sitter's accessories to a greater degree in his

[27] This type of striping in the petals of tulips was a result of a tulip-breaking virus spread by aphids that commonly infected tulips in the Netherlands in the seventeenth century. Paul Taylor, *Dutch Flower Painting 1600-1720* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995) 10-11.
[28] These titles all come from the Redwood Library's records. *French Costume of 1400, Father's Joy and Mother's Glory, Child at Prayer,* and *Pirate* appear in the 1859 Catalogue of the Redwood Library, while the remaining titles appear as listed in the accessions records for 1861 and 1862.
[29] These titles all appear in the 1861-1862 Redwood Library accession records.

private commissions. Perhaps the most ambitious painting of King's career for its scale and the complexity of the composition was his full-length portrait of *Louisa (Mrs. John Quincy) Adams* (c. 1824) **(Figure 41)**. Adams rests her right hand on the neck of a harp and holds open a large book of music with her left. A velvet swag pulled to the side brings into view the rushing waters of the Potomac. King indulged a favored practice in his portraits of both Louisa Adams and of Henry Clay, painting words on canvas. In his portrait of *Henry Clay* (1821), the congressman holds up his resolution in support of Latin-American independence **(Figure 42)**; the inkstand identifies Clay as the Speaker of the House, and the quill he used to pen the resolution rests in the still-open inkbottle.[30] In the case of Adams, King included sheet music for a popular ballad that reinforced both Adams' abilities as a musician and her importance as a significant force within polite society. King's portrait of Clay is retrospective. Clay sat in 1821, after he retired from Congress but as he was considering entering the 1824 Presidential race. He had transformed the position of Speaker of the House from an administrative role to a leadership position, and held the post during his entire tenure in Congress, from 1811 to 1820. During his last years in the House of Representatives, Clay repeatedly and passionately exhorted the United States government to support Latin American independence, but repeatedly was frustrated as domestic issues including the conflict over Missouri's admission to statehood overshadowed foreign affairs. Though Clay played a major role in the crafting of a solution to the Missouri issue, now known as the Missouri Compromise, when looking back on his career he chose purposefully to be remembered

[30] The inkstand is still in use today. According to the Office of the Clerk, United States House of Representatives, the inkstand is placed on the Speaker's lectern prior to calling each session of the House to order. Both sides of the stand are ornamented with swags and medallions with eagles, and the feet of the tray are made up of fasces with snakes winding around them. J. Leonard, a Georgetown silversmith and watchmaker, stamped the bottom of the stand, and is believed to have produced it at some point during the 1810s. Artandhistory.house.gov/art_artifacts/virtual_tours/house_chamber/rostrum.aspx

for his efforts on behalf of Latin America.[31] In a more intimate portrait, King portrayed a *Miss Satterlee* with her Golden Pheasant and its cage **(Figure 43)**.[32] The rare bird, which affectionately nips at the young woman's hand, especially by its shape and positioning relative to her body recalls emblematic imagery of captive birds as symbols of the willingly captive heart.[33] King's portrait of young *Gertrude Murray Shepard* blurs the line between portraiture and the fancy piece **(Figure 44)**. The painting, which incorporates emblematic imagery of the Infant St. John, shares many similarities with Sir Joshua Reynolds' *Infant St. John.* King owned an engraving after the painting, one of the many fancy pieces Reynolds painted of London street urchins in costume **(Figure 19)**. In Reynolds' painting, the young boy is draped in a swath of fabric that exposes his right arm and most of his legs. He looks at a lamb sitting to his left while he distractedly allows a shallow bowl to overflow at a waterfall that breaks through a small boulder in a fanciful wilderness setting. In King's portrait, young Gertrude Shepard kneels to feed a lamb that she holds close to her with a ribbon tied to its neck. She as well finds herself outdoors in an unidentifiable wilderness setting, and though she wears a dress that covers her chest and legs down to her ankle, the dress falls from both shoulders to expose her shoulders. All of these portraits were private commissions, never intended for the Gallery.

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[31] For Clay's mindset during the years 1817-1821 see David S. Heidler and Jeanne T. Heidler, *Henry Clay: The Essential American* (New York: Random House, 2010) esp. 135-153.

[32] The domesticated pheasant was native to China, but had been imported to the American colonies beginning in the eighteenth century; The Marquis de Lafayette sent George Washington seven golden pheasants from Louis XVI's aviary in 1786. Nancy Pick, *The Rarest of the Rare: Stories Behind the Treasures at the Harvard Museum of Natural History* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, Inc., 2004) 12.

[33] See, as only one instance of the theme, an emblem from Daniel Heinsius' *Emblemata Amatoria*, where a little bird freely enters his cage to accompany a motto from Petrarch, "Perch'io stesso mi strinsi (I put myself in bonds)". Daniel Heinsius, *Emblemata Amatoria* (1607-1608) Emblem 21.

Though King primarily produced paintings specifically for the Gallery and not as a byproduct of other commissions, there were exceptions. These included two portraits that stemmed from commissions from Joseph Delaplaine. King retained a first attempt at a portrait of *John Quincy Adams* (1819-1821) deemed unsatisfactory by Delaplaine, as well as a portrait of *John C. Calhoun* (1818-1820) that is similar to a portrait King is believed to have produced for Delaplaine during the same time period.[34] Portraits of *Joseph Gales, Jr.* (c. 1818), *Manuel Carvallo* (1834), *William Wirt* (1820) and *Margaret Bayard (Mrs. Samuel Harrison) Smith* (1829) also entered the collection as a result of portrait commissions.[35] Beyond these, however, King produced one coherent grouping of portraits for the Gallery that stemmed from a major commission. 21 of the 23 portraits of American Indians that King displayed in the Gallery were copies of portraits commissioned by the War Department.

KING AND THE AMERICAN INDIAN PORTRAITS

Paintings of American Indians made up a significant portion of the portrait collection in King's Gallery of Paintings. Of the 91 portraits Charles Bird King gave to the Redwood Library, 23 (25 percent) were portraits of American Indians. In addition to the portraits, both full and half-length compositions, King painted a genre scene titled *Indian Girl at her Toilet* (n.d.) and a composite portrait of five heads titled *Young Omahaw, War Eagle, Little Missouri, and Pawnees* (1822) for the Gallery **(Figures 45 &**

[34] Andrew Oliver, *Portraits of John Quincy Adams and his Wife* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1970) 98. The two Calhoun portraits are not identical. In the Delaplaine version, Calhoun looks out at the viewer, his coat is buttoned up, King includes more of the map, and both of Calhoun's hands. In the version King displayed in his Gallery, Calhoun looks off into the distance, his coat is unbuttoned, we see less of the map, and both hands are cut off slightly by the edges of the painting.

[35] King displayed a bust-length portrait of *Joseph Gales* that stemmed from the same sitting that produced a half-length portrait of Gales. King painted two versions of a portrait of *Manuel Carvallo* in 1834, one for the Gallery and the other for the Carvallos on a commission from Mr. Carvallo's father-in-law, Dr. James H. Causten, Jr.

46). By spanning multiple genres, the Indian paintings not only were significant as a class of portraits but also formed a cohesive subset subject within the collection.

Understanding the role the paintings played in King's mind is complicated by the fact that half of the Indian paintings, including the composite portrait, left the Gallery for the Redwood or elsewhere before King began to disperse his collection at the end of his life. The many portraits' departures suggest that King's priorities for his Gallery display shifted as time passed, and that his decision to copy so many of the War Department commissions was as much a testament to the subjects' popularity with visitors in the 1820s and 1830s as to King's personal interest. However, the ten portraits and *Indian Girl at her Toilet* that remained in the collection were a visual reminder to visitors to the Washington, D. C. Gallery that American Indians were real people and not a distant cultural abstraction. And the four paintings King produced that diverged from the War Department commissions – full-length portraits of *Keokuk* (1829) and *Nesouaquoit* (1837) **(Figures 55 & 56)**, the genre painting *Indian Girl at her Toilet*, and the romantic generalization *Young Omahaw, War Eagle, Little Missouri, and Pawnees* – speak more concretely about King's views and more particularly his goals in including American Indians in the Gallery precisely because they were original compositions and not copies.

King's American-Indian portraits were an outgrowth of a monumental commission from the United States War Department, which paid the artist to produce portraits of more than 100 American Indian delegates who visited Washington between 1821 and 1842. King also made versions of many of these portraits for his own Gallery, at times developing more elaborate compositions for himself than for the paintings intended for the War Department. Almost all of the paintings destined for the War Department burned in a fire at the Smithsonian in January 1865. However, they served as the basis for the lithographs in Thomas L. McKenney and James Hall's monumental

Indian Tribes of North America (1837-1844) and survive in that form. McKenney and Hall's three-volume work was the most ambitious illustrated book on any subject produced in the United States up to that point. It featured portraits and multi-page biographies of 120 American Indians, as well as a historical essay. The high quality of the finished product established its lithographer, J. T. Bowen, as preeminent in his field in the United States.[36] Many other versions of King's paintings of American Indians also survive because he not only painted copies (or variations) of his War Department commissions for his own Gallery but also sent home smaller-scale paintings with his portraits' subjects, and received private commissions for copies of several of the paintings he displayed in the Gallery.[37]

King's first commission from the War Department coincided with the 1821-1822 visit of a delegation of seventeen American Indians from the Upper Missouri River region. Thomas McKenney, Head of Indian Affairs for the War Department, used the delegation's visit as an excuse to begin a portrait collection. He commissioned King to paint seven of the leaders as well as the one woman who made the trip for display in the War Department. McKenney had begun to collect Indian "artifacts," objects of everyday or ceremonial utility, in the late 1810s, under the belief that American expansion would change Indian culture permanently if not destroy it utterly. He even wrote his Indian traders in an attempt to acquire "a few scalps" if they could accomplish the task without betraying to their Indian contacts that whites might consider them to be valuable objects

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[36] For a history of the production of the *History of Indian Tribes of North America*, see Chapter Four in Herman J. Viola, *The Indian Legacy of Charles Bird King* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1976) 68-87.

[37] In case of the first commission from McKenney, King painted eight of the seventeen delegates for the War Department, but was paid not only for those paintings but for portraits of each of the seventeen delegates to take home as a souvenir. The War Department paid King a total of $300 for this work. Ibid., 41.

(he never received one).[38] Over the next two decades, the War Department amassed an extensive permanent exhibit of over 140 portraits and thousands of artifacts, which the Smithsonian Institution ultimately acquired in the 1850s.

The Upper Missouri River delegation was the first large group of Indians to travel to Washington since Jefferson's administration, and their visit marked the beginning of a new United States Indian policy that encouraged face-to-face meetings between representatives of Indian nations and their "Great Father," the President of the United States. The American government recognized that the United States military could not fight all of the Indians across the wide expanse of American territories simultaneously. They hoped instead to awe delegates into submission by showing them the United States' vast territories and by demonstrating the federal administrative and military power of the capital at Washington. Though the War Department designed the tour to impress the American Indian delegates, the delegates' travels had an unintended side effect; they acquainted the urban Eastern white population, many members of which had never seen an Indian, with the representatives of the Western tribes.

Particularly in Washington, D.C., where the delegates remained for the longest period of time, white Americans not only were given the opportunity to learn about the delegates' cultures, but the abstract and distant "American Indian" type was replaced by acquaintance with one or more individual Indians, either through personal contact or through the many news articles and editorials that were published during their visits. King's portraits and *Young Omahaw, War Eagle, Little Missouri, and Pawnees* suggest that whites who associated with the Upper Missouri River delegates did not recognize the cultural diversity between the different tribes. Washingtonians thronged to see the

[38] Ibid., 20.

delegates and followed their movements as they toured the city.[39] The public performance of an "Indian Dance," advertised in the *National Intelligencer*, was a spectacle.[40] One witness wrote that "[a]n immense crowd attended" and that both Houses of Congress adjourned to be present.[41] Though all from the Upper Missouri River region, the delegates represented four different cultural groups: Pawnee, Kansa, Oto, and Omahaw. The Indians spoke two language groups and required an interpreter simply to communicate with one another.[42] Even more awkward for the delegation, the Kansa Indians at that time were at war with most of their neighbors. However, conflict between members of the delegation was largely invisible to outsiders. Events such as the "Indian Dance" reinforced Anglos' notions of cultural sameness by involving all of the delegates in a single activity.[43] King achieved the same sense of sameness in the composite portrait he painted after the delegation's visit, *Young Omahaw, War Eagle, Little Missouri, and Pawnees*; the five heads each are physically distinctive, but not enough so that they escape blending together into a single Indian type.

While the tribes remained culturally indistinct, the Upper Missouri delegates did become known in the capital city as individuals. Beyond the public events, some Washingtonians welcomed delegates into their homes. Otoes Hayne Hudjihini and

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[39] Anglos in other cities followed the delegation's movements with great interest as well. The Indians also traveled to Philadelphia (where John Neagle painted several portraits) and to New York before returning to Washington in early 1822 to meet with President Monroe.

[40] "We are authorized to say, that, if the weather is fair, the Deputation of Indians, now in this city, will perform many of their war dances and other feats of agility, on Saturday at 12 o'clock, in front of the President's House." "Indian Dance." *National Intelligencer* (February 9, 1822).

[41] Reprinted by the *National Intelligencer.* "Indian Dance." *National Intelligencer* (March 7, 1822).

[42] At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Plains Indian cultures spoke a total of six language families. The Iowa-Oto-Missouri and Omaha-Ponca-Osage-Kansa spoke Siouan; the Pawnee spoke Caddoan. Patrick T. Houlihan & Patricia Trenton, *Native Americans: Five Centuries of Changing Images* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1989): 80.

[43] William Faux's American correspondent wrote him that at least 6,000 people attended the February 9, 1822 Indian Dance performance. William Faux, *Faux's Memorable Days in America, 1819–1820, Early Western Travels* (Cleveland, OH: A.H. Clark Co., 1904 [1823]), XII: 51.

Shaumonekusse received many invitations to tea and to dine with Washington families during their visit, and the novelty of the beautiful young Indian woman made her popular with whites **(Figures 47 & 48)**.[44] King painted at least four versions of his portrait of *Hayne Hudjihini*. It was the painting he was asked to replicate most often of any subject across his entire oeuvre and was a testament to her popularity. Pawnee brave Petalesharro proved another romantic favorite with the public **(Figure 49)**. Not long before he traveled to Washington, Petalesharro had rescued a captured Itean woman who was to be burned at the stake by his people. The dramatic story of his bravery in concert with his youthful and handsome appearance made him "the theme of the city," as McKenney described it, and inspired the "ladies" of Washington to commission a medal in his honor.[45]

Looking at the paintings King copied for his Gallery as a group, patterns emerge. King copied all eight of the portraits the War Department commissioned. These included portraits of the three Indians most popular with Washingtonians: Otoes Shaumonekusse and his wife Hayne Hudjihini, and Pawnee brave Petalesharro. The color red repeats prominently through all of the portraits, most vividly through the scalp roaches that five of the men wear, as well as in the paint that adorns all but Pawnee *Petalesharro* and Omahaw *Ongpatonga* **(Figure 50)**. The term "red skin" was integrating into the American idiom in the 1820s, and it appeared multiple times in the speeches reprinted in the *National Intelligencer* after the Missouri River Delegation's visit. It is possible that the prominent role that red plays in King's Indian portraits reflects the increasingly

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[44] The young Oto woman was popular during her sojourn in Washington. She and her husband Shaumonekusse were frequently invited to dine by the physician Jonathan Barber. Ibid., 52.

[45] Thomas L. McKenney and James Hall, *History of the Indian Tribes of North America, with Biographical Sketches and Anecdotes of the Principal Chiefs, Embellished with One Hundred and Twenty Portraits, from the Indian Gallery in the Department of War, At Washington* Vol. I (Philadelphia: J. T. Bowen, 1848) 148-149.

prevalent use of the term. In King's *Hayne Hudjihini (Eagle of Delight)* and his later *Rant che wai Me (Female Flying Pigeon)* portraits **(Figure 51)**, both women wear red dresses and have prominent red streaking at their scalps. This is an inventive evocation of the concept of the "red skin" since women did not wear war paint.[46] "Red skin" acquired racial connotations in the nineteenth century. However, its origin was within American Indian culture and was initially a cultural and not a racial designation. Though its' original meaning is not completely clear, it may have been a way for Indians to distinguish between themselves and the "white" men who never painted their bodies. It only entered the English language through eighteenth and nineteenth-century French interpreters.[47]

While from time to time King created more elaborate versions of American-Indian portraits for his own Gallery, he does not appear to have done so in regard to this delegation. The McKenney and Hall lithographs based on the War Department portraits are extremely similar in detail to King's surviving portraits. All of the men wear the peace medals awarded them by the President, and most wear multiple strands of beaded hoop earrings as well. All, including the woman *Hayne Hudjihini*, wrap themselves in animal skin blankets. Two of the Otoes – *Shaumonekusse* and *Choncape* **(Figure 52)**– also wear bear-claw necklaces. For the Pawnees' portraits, King created ambiguous wilderness scenes with blue skies tinged with pink to evoke dusk, low hills or mountains, and dark green trees in the near background. He placed the other Upper Missouri Indians

[46] In King's single genre painting with an American Indian theme, *Indian Girl at her Toilet*, the young woman wraps herself in an animal skin blanket but sits on top of a red blanket as well.

[47] Two excellent essays research the origins of the term "red skin." Alden T. Vaughan focuses on the way in which Anglo perceptions of American Indians shifted over the first two centuries of British and French contact. Ives Goddard relates the history of the term "red skin" within various American Indian language systems and the eventual translation of the term into English. Alden T. Vaughan, "From White Man to Redskin: Changing Anglo-American Perceptions of the American Indian," *The American Historical Review* LXXXVII, 4 (October 1982) 917-953; Ives Goddard, "'I am a Red- Skin': The Adoption of a Native American Expression (1769-1826)," *Native American Studies* 19:2 (2005) 1-20.

against neutral brown backgrounds. Though certain elements such as backgrounds do recur in multiple portraits, neither the execution style nor the complexity of the designs suggests that King devoted less time or energy to this project than to other commissions. Considering the War Department paid him only $300 for 25 portraits, well beneath his regular fee at this time, it is perhaps surprising that King did not make more compositional choices intended to facilitate rapid production.[48]

Few later delegations of Indians captured Washingtonians' imaginations like the Upper Missouri delegation did in 1821-1822. However, individual chiefs did. Choctaw chief Pushmataha made a particularly strong impression during his 1824 visit. When Pushmataha passed away suddenly from a respiratory infection while still in Washington, he was buried in the Congressional Cemetery with full military honors. Before he died, he had asked: "When I am gone, let the big guns be fired over me." The funeral procession stretched at least a mile in length and included both cavalry and a band.[49] *Pushmataha* demonstrates King's ability to express character as well as to capture a sense of the untenable position in which the United States government placed American Indians **(Figure 53)**. Pushmataha wears a formal, tailored suit with gold epaulettes, a ruffled collar, and a top hat emblazoned with three large feathers. He exudes confidence and poise, but his suit is enough different from clothing a white American would wear that the distinction is immediately apparent and unmistakable. To King's white visitor, it would have appeared to be what it was: a costume, an affectation. King further reinforced this impression by placing the chief against a generalized wilderness background, a context in which such attire made no practical sense. In his entry on

[48] According to his friend Thomas Sully, King at this time charged "for a 25 by 30 - $40 under that size $35". McKenney paid well under King's normal rate for a portrait; the average cost/portrait for the work King produced from the 1821 delegation's visit was $12. Viola, *The Indian Legacy of Charles Bird King*, 41.

[49] McKenney and Hall, *History*,Volume I, 192-193.

Pushmataha in *History of the Indian Tribes of North America*, the chief's biography illustrates for author James Hall the truth that when Indians live in close proximity to Anglos, their "savage character is always seen in a modified aspect."[50] In the accompanying lithograph, Pushmataha wears the military dress uniform of King's portrait, but without the top hat and feathers, and against a blank background **(Figure 54)**. The changes create a dramatic shift in effect. The chief is more natural, less posed and awkward, than in the setting and attire King represented. King's portrait depicts a man caught between two worlds. He has the dignity and the attire of a gentleman, but the feathers that emblazon his top hat and the wilderness that surrounds him together highlight the incongruity of the lifestyle the American government wished Indians to adopt within their native settings. Because the War Department paintings perished in the 1865 Smithsonian fire, we cannot know at what stage the hat and feathers disappeared. King may not have included them in the War Department-commissioned painting, or Henry Inman may have removed them when he copied the painting preparatory to the production of the lithograph for McKenney and Hall's *History*.

The awkward otherness King captured in his Gallery portrait would have been all the more poignant, and locally significant, to Washington visitors due to Pushmataha's untimely death. Particularly in the early years of King's Gallery, Pushmataha's story would have been well known to the artist's Washington visitors, if not to visitors from other parts of the country. The portrait's presence in the collection, then, may reflect King's desire to capture visitor interest in the subject of American Indians generally as well as specifically by recalling local events. And, indeed, in his Gallery King included portraits of Indians who were either nationally famous or who struck a particular chord

[50] McKenney and Hall, *History,* Volume I, 185.

with Washingtonians more frequently than other subjects. King also tended to remove his portraits of American Indians from display more quickly than he did some of his other paintings. He made gifts of 11 Indian paintings to the Redwood Library before 1859, and retained in his collection an additional ten through the end of his life.[51] He relinquished *Young Omahaw, War Eagle, Little Missouri, and Pawnees* by 1838, when his former student John Gadsby Chapman submitted it to the National Academy of Design exhibition in New York.[52] King's Gallery collection was relatively stable over its lifetime; King more frequently added than subtracted works. As a result, the early exit of half of the Indian portraits strongly suggests that King displayed them more in response to popular than from personal interest.

King exhibited three full-length portraits of American Indians in the Gallery: *Nesouaquoit (Bear in the Fork of a Tree)* (1837) and two copies after portraits by James Otto Lewis, *Keokuk* (1829) and *Wanata* (1826) **(Figures 55, 56, & 58)**. All three paintings were similar in scale, approximately half life-size.[53] King may have intended for *Keokuk* and *Wanata* to be pendants. Both were full-length portraits on canvases 38 ½ x 26 ½ in. in dimension and subjects' stances are analogous, with each man grasping a rod in his right hand. Keokuk holds the ceremonial staff of his people, while Wanata holds out a rifle adorned with black and white feathers.

Keokuk, Wanata, and *Nesouaquoit* all were larger than the other Indian portraits in King's Gallery and larger than most of King's portraits of whites; they would have

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[51] He gave the first two paintings, the portraits of Otoes *Shaumonekusse* and his wife *Hayne Hudjhini* to the Redwood in 1829. Mason, *Annals of the Redwood Library,* 133.

[52] King only exhibited twice with the National Academy of Design, both submissions made by John Gadsby Chapman, who the catalogue listed as owning the works: "57. Portrait of Eagle's Delight" in 1837 and "54. Young Omahaw, War Eagle, Little Missouri and Pawnees, Who Visited Washington in 1821" in 1838. *National Academy of Design Exhibition Record* (New York: Printed for the New-York Historical Society, 1943) I, 278.

[53] *Nesouaquoit* measures 35 ½ x 29 ½ inches, and both *Keokuk* and *Wanata* measure 38 ½ x 26 ½ inches.

stood out no matter which paintings surrounded them. The portraits also all featured imagined Western landscapes. Nesouaquoit sits on a rock next to a river; a tree rises behind him as a visualization of his name. War feathers emerge from the top of his head and from the trunk of his body as leaves and branches do from a tree and further reinforce the visual analogy. While *Nesouaquoit's* setting is ambiguous, Keokuk clearly stands on the Western plains, with hazy mountains massing behind him. The Sauk people lived on the Missouri plains at the time King painted this portrait; the mountain peak behind Keokuk's spear therefore is entirely inaccurate to Keokuk's home landscape. The painting also diverges from the other extant portraits by King of Keokuk, which place him either against an open sky with low plains behind him **(Figure 60)**, or in the case of the *History of the Indian Tribes of North America* lithograph, seated on a rock but with no middle or background **(Figure 61)**. The full-length portrait of *Keokuk* betrays King's relative ignorance of American Indian life and culture, which was rarely immediately apparent because most of King's Indian portraits were bust-length and included few environmental details. It is unlikely that King wished intentionally to deceive the viewer; he simply accepted the composition he received from Lewis as accurate. The Indians he painted always traveled to him. In fact, he may never have traveled further west than Richmond, Virginia, which he visited early in his career before settling in Washington, D.C.

King combined elements of two previous portraits of Keokuk to construct his full-length portrait: his own 1824 half-length portrait for the War Department and the full-length portrait that Lewis produced during the Treaty of the Prairie du Chien in 1825 **(Figure 59)**.[54] King referred to his own portrait of Keokuk for the subject's facial

[54] My thanks to Frank Goodyear for pointing alerting me to King's references to James Otto Lewis's *Keokuk.*

features. In both compositions, Keokuk looks out to his right, his head slightly angled upwards. However, Keokuk's features are more generalized in the full-length portrait. King does not provide the same muscular or skeletal definition of the head that marks the bust-length portrait; in particular, the lips and cheekbone structure are less finished.

James Otto Lewis, whose Indian portraits King copied, was a self-taught artist from Detroit about whom little is known beyond his substantial production of portraits of American Indians, many of which he included in a series called the *Aboriginal Portfolio* (Philadelphia, 1835).[55] Lewis was an artist of limited abilities, and his portraits were not strong likenesses.[56] This is apparent to the untrained eye, but an 1847 daguerreotype of Keokuk provides the opportunity to assess Lewis and King's portrayals more critically **(Figure 62)**. In the photograph, Keokuk has aged appreciably, but his pointed brows, round face, and the curve to his lips have not changed at all. Even though only a year separated his portrait from King's, Lewis appears to paint another person entirely.[57] The lithograph based on Lewis's portrait may have been successful in documenting the chief's clothing, ritual accessories, and perhaps even the design of his body paint, but outside of the expression of the pursed lips and an exaggerated arch to one of Keokuk's eyebrows there is no facial resemblance to either King's portrait or to the later daguerreotype. Unlike Keokuk, King never met Wanata. He followed Lewis's portrayal, and the resulting portrait suffered as a result **(Figures 58 & 59)**. Lewis emphasized similar physical characteristics in his portraits of *Keokuk* and *Wanata*: exaggerated

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[55] Viola, *The Indian Legacy of Charles Bird King*, 76-79.

[56] Brian Dippie has written colorfully of Lewis: "Forgetting anatomy, which bedeviled many of his untrained contemporaries, including Catlin, Lewis lacked a basic grasp of physiognomy. Eyes and giant noses wandered about his Indian faces, anticipating Picasso without the intention." Brian W. Dippie, *Catlin and his Contemporaries: the Politics of Patronage* (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1990) 87.

[57] For reference, see the 1847 daguerreotype Andrew Cosentino reproduces in *The Paintings of Charles Bird King*, Fig. 78.

cheekbones, sunken eye sockets, outsized and angular noses, and practically no foreheads. The only significant difference between Lewis's treatments of the two Indians is that he depicted Keokuk with a recessed jaw line, and Wanata with a strong jaw line. In both cases, it is clear that Lewis had little anatomical understanding of the structure of the skull to ground his depiction. King's portrait of *Wanata* closely copied not only Wanata's beaded hoop earrings and the size and angle of his scalp roach, but also Lewis's weak anatomical details. In contrast, King only copied Keokuk's clothing and ornaments in his full-length portrait of that chief: the tunic, feathered leg-bands, silver crown and armbands, the ceremonial staff, and the blanket festooned with scalps.

What is particularly revealing about King's portraits after Lewis is that he produced them at all. Wanata was not especially well known, nor did he ever travel to Washington. Why him? Why then? It seems likely that King was interested in adding a full-length portrait of an American Indian to his collection, and that the type of painting was the primary motivation rather than the identity of the sitter or even the accuracy of the depiction. Perhaps King determined it most expedient to make a copy for himself while he was copying *Wanata* for the War Department, rather than to wait for a chance to construct a full-length composition of a chief visiting Washington. When the War Department commissioned the full-length *Keokuk* based on Lewis's portrait in 1829, it gave King the opportunity to produce a pendant for *Wanata*. This time, however, he was able to refer to his own portrait of the sitter to improve the likeness and to paint an Indian chief who was well known both nationally and, as a result of his two visits to the capital, in Washington, D.C.

If King's full-length portraits of *Keokuk* and *Wanata* betray King's relative ignorance of the western landscape, as a whole the portraits he produced for the Gallery captured the individuality and humanity of his subjects. The face paint, clothing, and

darker skin tones of King's portraits of American Indians separate them from King's portraits of whites and reinforce the "red" in the terms "red skin" or "red Indian," in use at that time. However, the paintings in no way generalize their subjects. King painted the majority of his Indian sitters in their war paint and ceremonial attire, but not all chose to be portrayed that way. The wide variation among the portraits in terms of their scale and compositional type, the variety of accouterments (tomahawks, spears, beads, feathers, animal skins, ceremonial paint, peace medals), and state of dress (from semi-naked to European suits) highlights the complexity of American Indian culture as well as the issue of acculturation in the nineteenth century. King's paintings refuse to compartmentalize or to reduce the American Indian to a single type, and his respect for his subjects becomes increasingly evident when one compares his paintings with the written analyses of Indians by racial-determinist phrenologists in the 1830s.

WAYS OF VIEWING – PHYSIOGNOMY, PHRENOLOGY, AND THE NINETEENTH CENTURY AMERICAN AUDIENCE

Charles Bird King was more concerned with developing an American painting style based on European precedents than in making cultural or political judgments on the character of his sitters. However, King's audience's interest in viewing the collection would have been broader. Some visitors may have been interested in the style of the paintings, while many others likely looked for character and likeness in the portraits. Americans of the nineteenth century were biography-obsessed. In his history of American biography, Edward O'Neill describes a "great mass of writing" of biographies, primarily by clergymen but also by literary and political figures in the first half of the nineteenth century. Of Parson Weems, O'Neill writes that his biographies "had a wider

influence and reading than any other secular books of their day in America."[58] Americans displayed their fascination with biography through their application of the theories of physiognomy and phrenology to portraiture. Both theories purported it to be possible to ascertain a person's character from his external appearance, physiognomy through facial features and phrenology through distinctive bumps on the skull. Physiognomy, beginning in the late-eighteenth century and joined by phrenology in the 1830s, captured the nineteenth-century popular imagination. Biographers and novelists alike employed them to delineate the character of their subjects, and periodical literature frequently both critiqued and employed them.[59]

PHYSIOGNOMY

Swiss minister Johann Caspar Lavater re-popularized the ancient study of physiognomy in the last quarter of the eighteenth century.[60] His published his major work, *Essays on Physiognomy*, in German in 1775-1778. The English translation appeared in London in the 1780s, and the first American edition followed in 1794. By

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[58] Edward O'Neill, *A History of American Biography, 1800-1935* (New York: A. S. Barnes, 1961 [1935]), 19 and 23.

[59] American novelists often employed both physiognomic and phrenological language in their writing. Edgar Allan Poe was particularly fascinated with both physiognomy and phrenology and used phrenological terms as descriptors in his short stories. For example, he described Roderick Usher (*Decline of the House of Usher*, 1839) as having "an inordinate expansion above the regions of the temple" in the area where one would find Ideality and Constructiveness. Walt Whitman was another devotee of phrenology. He published a phrenological chart of his head in three editions of *Leaves of Grass*, and used phrenological language. In "Chants Democratic," Whitman writes of the "Manhattanese bred" that "Never offering others, always offering himself, corroborating his phrenology,/ Voluptuous, inhabitive [*sic*], intuitive, of copious friendship, sublimity, firmness, self-esteem, comparison, individuality, form, locality, eventuality,…." For further information on the influence of phrenology on American literature, see Taylor Stoehr, *Hawthorne's Mad Scientists* (Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1978). Erik Grayson, "Weird Science, Weirder Unity: Phrenology and Physiognomy in Edgar Allan Poe," *Mode* 1 (2005) 56-77, esp. 58. Edgar Allan Poe, "Decline and Fall of the House of Usher" in *Complete Tales and Poems of Edgar Allan Poe* (New York: Random House, 1975) 234. Madeleine B. Stern, *Heads and Headline: the Phrenological Fowlers* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1971) 107-108. Walt Whitman, *Poems of Walt Whitman (Leaves of Grass)* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1902) 107.

[60] Aristotle, among others, wrote about the consistencies between physical appearance and character. For example, *Prior Analytics* (2.27): "It is possible to infer character from features,…."

1810 a total of fifty-five editions had been published in German, French, Dutch, Italian and English. The theory had particular appeal in the English-speaking world – almost half of the editions were British.[61] Physiognomy's theoretical premise is that what we know of an individual through his writings or actions can be divined with equal accuracy through study of his countenance. Lavater wrote that

> …Physiognomy would be the science of discovering the relative connection between the interior and exterior man; between the visible surface and the invisible spirit which it incloses [sic]; ... [62]

Lavater considered the quantitative portion of his science to be the measurement of the head, which he accomplished not through real number measurements as would phrenologists later, but through percentages relative to the whole:

> Thus the face is the summary and representative of all the three divisions: the forehead to the eyebrows, the mirror of intelligence; the cheeks and the nose form the seat of the moral life; and the mouth and chin aptly represent the animal life; while the eye, the centre and summary of the whole, gives to each the tone of direction.[63]

Commentary on and criticism of physiognomy appeared in periodical literature frequently. Most writers accepted the premise that one's physique reflected his or her character, but even its staunchest supporters were wary of writing about the theory in anything more than general terms.

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[61] John Graham, "Lavater's Physiognomy in England" in *Journal of the History of Ideas* XXII, 4 (October-December 1961) 562.

[62] Johann Caspar Lavater, *The whole works of Lavater on physiognomy; written by the Rev. John Caspar Lavater, Citizen of Zurich. Translated from the last Paris edition by George Grenville Esqr. Illustrated by several hundred engravings* (London: Printed for W. Butters, & sold by W. Simmonds, Paternoster Row, 1800) Vol. I, 12. Determining how the exterior reflects the interior requires analyzing different elements of the countenance, which Lavater separates into three divisions:
"…the forehead to the eyebrows, the mirror of intelligence; the cheeks and the nose form the seat of the moral life; and the mouth and chin aptly represent the animal life; while the eye, the centre and summary of the whole, gives to each the tone of direction." Ibid. Vol. I, 10.

[63] Idem.

The language Lavater used in his *Essays* explains the difficulty other writers had in either supporting or refuting his theories. Though Lavater described a multitude of profiles, it is difficult to follow his conclusions in a manner that prepares the reader to perform a physiognomic analysis himself. Most of the accompanying images in the *Essays* were line-drawing profiles, and in each one, Lavater found perfection elusive. Furthermore, Lavater's analytical language was itself remarkably imprecise. For instance, describing one set of profiles as exhibiting "sagacity, perspicacity, profundity" **(Figure 63)**:

> No. 1. is not an universal genius; he selects, and attaches himself to a particular point; No. 2, embraces a more ample field, and ranges through it at his ease; No. 3, lays hold, in objects, of every thing they present; he digs, he penetrates, he examines them in their combination, he decompounds them, and considers all the parts separately. 1, Is the best disposed for the arts; 2, has the most taste; 3, is the greatest philosopher. Forehead 1, has nothing keen, it is simple and open; this man is capable of extracting the quintessence of things, without employing violent efforts; his look concentrates, as in a focus, the rays which the forehead has collected. With that contour more shaded and more compact, 2, will better distinguish, and act with greater effect, than the preceding; 3, advances directly to the point; what he has once laid hold of, he never lets go; he disposes his materials with more care and reflection, but with less intelligence and taste than the other two; his body constitution implies mental firmness not easily to be shaken or turned from his purpose. The form of the forehead, however, slopes rather too much, and the projection resulting from it is too mean to permit this head to rank among those of great men.[64]

Lavater based these analyses of the different profiles on their physiognomic characteristics, but his language was both subjective and qualitative. Nowhere did he refer to any sort of calculation of the shapes of the heads or on how different features balance one another. His analysis, rather, required the reader to take for granted conclusions without the presentation of the underlying facts on which those conclusions were based. As a result, while Lavater's general theories were appealing to many

[64] Ibid., Vol IV: 45. The comments refer to the plate opposite page 245.

Europeans and Americans in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, his specific examples rarely provided his reader with any method beyond casual observation to conduct their own analyses.

A natural connection existed between physiognomy and the visual arts, especially portraiture. Lavater's suggestion that an artist could express character through the likeness of the countenance tapped into already-popular artistic rhetoric that the portraitist revealed character through facial features. Physiognomy provided additional support to the fine arts by extending them the credibility of science applied to subjective attitudes. In the introduction to a 1794 edition, Lavater recounted that his discovery of physiognomic theory derived from his own interest in portraiture. One day, he discovered that two portraits he had drawn were very similar. On further consideration, he realized that not only were the countenances of the individuals akin to one another, but to his "astonishment" he "received certain proofs that these persons were as similar in character as in feature."[65] He wrote frequently in his *Essays* about painters' work, in particular Raphael, Rembrandt, and Holbein: his friend and fellow Swiss, the British Academician Henry Fuseli translated the first English edition of the Essays.

Although physiognomic theory celebrated the ability of portraiture to convey character through likeness, the theory did not find favor with all artists. In order to defy accusations that they were mere copyists, eighteenth-century painters, and in particular Sir Joshua Reynolds, argued that a great portraitist identifies the character within and does not merely trace the exterior by rote. In his *Fourth Discourse* in 1771 (December

[65] Different versions of Lavater's *Essay* have different language both because he revised and enlarged his "Lectures" and because translators also abridged different elements of the text. Though the substance does not change, nor does the generally unspecific language, it is frequently difficult to track statements from one edition to another. Johann Caspar Lavater, *Essays on physiognomy; for the promotion of the knowledge and the love of mankind*, Thomas Holcraft, trans. 1st American Edition (Boston: Printed for William Spotswood & David West, 1794) 18.

10), before the first German edition of Lavater's *Essays* had even appeared, Reynolds wrote that the countenance does not always reflect a person's strengths and capabilities:

> [t]he Painter has no other means of giving an idea of the dignity of the mind, but by that external appearance which grandeur of thought does generally, though not always, impress upon the countenance; and by that correspondence of figure to sentiment and situation, which all men wish, but cannot command.[66]

Reynolds' point is that the artist must at times reconcile the countenance with character when he detects greatness of mind that the face does not reflect. The resulting idealization shares with physiognomy the belief that facial features express character, but with the critical caveat that the face's ability to communicate can be fleeting and not fixed. However, despite Lavater's emphasis on the rules of calculation in examining a profile, his individual analyses obliquely endorse the type of idealization Reynolds recommends. He notes frequently that certain character traits may only pass the countenance fleetingly and that without extensive acquaintance with a subject they may pass wholly unnoticed. If the physiognomist must search out the fleeting in order to construct an accurate profile, he is little different from the painter who memorializes the passing expression and produces a portrait that might not resemble the sitter as he was best known.

A decade after completing his *Essays on Physiognomy*, Lavater composed *Aphorisms of Man*, a book of maxims. We do not know whether Charles Bird King owned a copy of Lavater's *Essays*, but he did own *Aphorisms of Man*.[67] Though it is not a treatise on physiognomy, the ambiguity and adaptability inherent to physiognomic analysis are embedded in the text. Aphorisms 242 and 420, for instance:

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[66] Sir Joshua Reynolds, "Discourse Four," *Discourses on Art. 1771.* New York: Collier, 1961: 58.

[67] King presented the Redwood Library with a copy of *Aphorisms of Man*, unfortunately now lost, so we do not know which edition.

> 242) The connoisseur in painting discovers an original by some great line, though covered with dust, and disguised by daubing; so he who studies man discovers a valuable character by some original trait, though unnoticed, disguised, or debased - ravished at the discovery, he feels it his duty to restore it to its own genuine splendour. Him who, in spite of contemptuous pretenders, has the boldness to do this, choose for your friend.
>
> 420) As you hear so you think; as you look so you feel.

The aphorisms appear to be at odds with one another. The first of the two avers that greatness both in painting and in individual character can be difficult to perceive, hidden as it were behind the clutter of distracting physical appearance, while the second speaks to transparency of thought through expression. Though the two concepts ought to be mutually exclusive, in actuality they approach the notion of character from different standpoints. "[A]s you look so you feel" reminds the reader to consider the physical manifestation of feelings, as well as suggests that it is possible to control your emotions through your expressions. In other words, if you look horrified, you most likely feel horror, but if you can find a way to temper that expression you may also temper the feeling underlying it. The connection with hearing/thinking is equally significant not because Lavater believed that a listener will believe all that he hears, but rather that he hears what he wishes to hear, and thinks accordingly. Hearing and expression, listening and feeling - all of these elements relate back to God's gift of free will to humanity. This is a major distinction between physiognomy and phrenology, for the latter presumes the importance of genetics and chance in the construction of the bumps of the head, and therefore denies at least an element of free will to the individual, while Lavater's "fixed" countenance is in reality anything but fixed.

Charles Bird King's relationship with physiognomy becomes more concrete through his participation in the most ambitious American biographical endeavor of the early nineteenth century. Physiognomy provided the premise for Joseph Delaplaine's

Repository of the Lives and Portraits of Distinguished American Characters.[68] In the prospectus for the project, Delaplaine argued that neither portrait nor biography could alone fully define greatness:

> Even to the most skilful [sic] physiognomist the face of a human being can reveal nothing more than a generalized outline of his prevailing disposition – an obscure intimation of the predominant passions of his heart. For the purposes to which this publication is directed, something more is requisite: the moral being must be described as well as the physical – and the personal portrait be accompanied with a characteristic biographical sketch of the man intended to be commemorated. Neither can be perfectly satisfactory by itself – the union of them only leaves nothing to be wished for.[69]

King painted two portraits intended for the *Repository*, *Charles Carroll* and *General Robert Goodloe Harper*, but publication of new volumes ceased before these men could be included. If the physiognomic descriptions to accompany the portraits were ever written, they have not survived.[70] He also painted at least eight and possibly as many as forty-six portraits for Delaplaine's proposed portrait gallery, "Delaplaine's National Panzographia for the Reception of the Portraits of Distinguished Americans."[71]

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[68] The installments were Volume I, Parts 1 & 2, and Volume II, Part 1. Volume II, Part 2 was never published, nor did it proceed far enough to have survived in draft form. The order of the biographies was Volume I: Columbus, Vespucci, Dr. Benjamin Rush, Fisher Ames, Alexander Hamilton, George Washington, Peyton Randolph, Thomas Jefferson, John Jay, Rufus King, De Witt Clinton, Robert Fulton. Volume II: Samuel Adams, George Clinton, Henry Laurens, Benjamin Franklin, Francis Hopkinson, Robert Morris.

[69] Quoted by the editor from the prospectus submitted by Delaplaine. "Delaplaine's Repository of the Portraits and lives of the Heroes, Philosophers, and Statesmen of AMERICA," *The Port-Folio* IV, 1 (July, 1814) 115-116 (entire article 112-117).

[70] Charles Carroll wrote to Delaplaine on August 21, 1816 to inform him that he had been in contact with King and would schedule sittings for his portrait for the winter. Carroll to Delaplaine, August 21, 1816 (on file in the Historic American Building Survey, National Park Service, Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C.), quoted by Andrew Cosentino, *The Paintings of Charles Bird King*, 127. Cosentino writes that King's portrait of General Harper was also intended for the *Repository*. Ibid., 37.

[71] A catalogue of Peale's New York Museum and Gallery of the Fine Arts from 1825 attributes 46 paintings to King. Of the portraits listed, other records confirm that Charles Bird King painted 20 of the subjects, many of them for Delaplaine. On a visit to King's studio on March 24, 1819, John Quincy Adams noted portraits of General Jackson, Calhoun, Ambassador Bagot, Col. R.M. Johnson, Alexander Smyth, General Parker, General Smyth, General Rhea, Colonel Butler, Senator Morell, and Ambassador de Onis. Delaplaine (or someone else after the collection was sold) evidently submitted some of these paintings, as well as others painted by King, to the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts Annual Exhibitions between

Delaplaine reiterated his commitment to Physiognomy in the Preface to the first volume of the *Repository*, and then included physical descriptions of each subject that reinforced the character analysis, stating, "by the combined operations of the type and the graver will a correct image of the whole man be exhibited to view."[72] Perhaps most striking is the description of Columbus, from whom the author was separated by three centuries and of whom he had only ever seen portraits:

> Columbus was of lofty stature, a long visage, and a majestic aspect: his nose was aquiline, his eyes grey, and his complexion clear and somewhat ruddy. He was a man of wit and pleasantry, in his habits sociable, and in conversation elegant and refined. The comeliness of his mien, added to his condescension, affability and discretion conciliated the affections of those who were around him, while, by an air of grandeur and authority, he never failed to command respect…. His whole appearance was so expressive of his character, that an entire stranger, on first seeing him, could never regard him but as a distinguished personage.[73]

Despite Delaplaine's attempt to provide a physiognomic description, the language is imprecise and only the "long visage" and "aquiline" nose are terms specific to physiognomy.[74]

1822 and 1825. Four of the paintings appear in the PAFA catalogues as "painted for Delaplaine's Gallery," one as "Painted for Joseph Delaplaine," and several others that Adams noted in King's studio at the time King was working for Delaplaine were exhibited during the same time period without comment as to who submitted them. Rubens Peale acquired Delaplaine's collection in 1823 from Joseph Reed, who had in turn acquired it from Delaplaine. There is no record that King painted the remainder of the paintings, and the New York Museum's collection has been lost, which prevents visual analysis. However, it is certainly possible that King did paint the other portraits as well. "Peale's New-York Museum and Gallery of the Fine Arts," cited in *The Pre-1877 Art Exhibition Catalogue Index*, Smithsonian American Art Museum, P.O. Box 37012, MRC 970, Washington, D.C. 20013-7012; Andrew Oliver, *Portraits of John and Abigail Adams* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1967) 92; Gordon M. Marshall, "The Golden Age of Illustrated Biographies: Three Case Studies" in *American Portrait Prints…* 44. *The Annual Exhibition Record of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts* (Madison, CT: Sound View Press, 1988-1989) Volume I, 114**;** for information about the portraits on record as having been painted by Charles Bird King, see the individual entries in Cosentino, *The Paintings of Charles Bird King.*

[72] Joseph Delaplaine, *Repository of the Lives and Portraits of Distinguished American Characters* (Philadelphia, PA: Printed for Joseph Delaplaine, 1815-1816) Vol. I, Part 1:iii.

[73] Ibid., Vol. I, Part 1: 17.

[74] E. Millicent Sowerby, *Catalogue of the Library of Thomas Jefferson* (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1952-1959) IV*:* 170-72, item 15, part 5 for the three versions of the portrait of Columbus and 4:297-299, item 165, 4:393, item 16, and 5:213. See IV:166, item 12 regarding Vespucci.

Only one of the two paintings Delaplaine commissioned from King for inclusion in the Repository, the portrait of *Charles Carroll* (c. 1817), has survived **(Figure 64)**. King emphasized the aging statesman's expansive forehead, the seat of his intellect, which retreats backwards to the slightest degree.[75] His head is perfectly proportional, a sign of "the proper disposition of the mental faculties, and of the regularity of the character in general."[76] His nose is his most prominent feature, and it accords with Lavater's requirements for the physiognomy of a man with "a character of distinguished excellence":

> Its length ought to be equal to that of the forehead.
>
> It must have a gentle falling-in near the root.
>
> Viewed in the front, the ridge must be large with the two sides nearly parallel: but the breadth must be a little increased near the middle.
>
> Etc…[77]

Next to his nose Carroll's lips, which are firm but relaxed, are his most significant physiognomic feature. For Lavater, "When they close agreeably and without effort, and the design of them is correct (symmetrical, 'well-serpentined'), they indicate a character firm, reflecting, and judicious."[78] Other of King's portraits also encourage a positive physiognomic reading. *William Henry Crawford* evidences a broad forehead, well-defined pointed nose, high cheekbones, and firm lips **(Figure 65)**. The portraits of *John Quincy Adams* and *John C. Calhoun*, while very different in effect, both emphasize physiognomic counterparts to known character traits. In Adams' case, King has focused on the sitter's expansive forehead, appropriate to Adams' well-known intellectual

[75] A forehead sloping backwards "indicate[s], in general, imagination, spirit, and delicacy." Lavater, Vol.. III, 214.
[76] Ibid., III: 203.
[77] Ibid., III: 291.
[78] Ibid., III: 311.

abilities. Calhoun's firm jaw and tight lips suggest his tenacity bordering on mulish stubbornness.

Physiognomic theory may have guided King's decision to include a copy after Stuart's medallion portrait of *Thomas Jefferson* in the Gallery.[79] The unusual profile orientation recalls Lavater's use of profile drawings to demonstrate the minor changes in form that could intimate great changes in character. The language Jefferson's daughter Martha Jefferson Randolph used to describe the portrait – that which "best gives the shape of his magnificent head and its peculiar pose" – is suggestive of physiognomy, focusing as she did on the "shape" of the head.[80] Jefferson himself wrote in 1815 to Horatio Gates Spafford that the painting was that "deemed the best which has been taken of me."[81] Though profile portraits were uncommon, silhouettes were extremely popular both for their low cost and for their apparent accuracy to likeness. Either taken by hand, or through a mechanism such as the physiognotrace Charles Willson Peale installed at his Philadelphia Museum in 1802, silhouettes were considered objective and therefore accurate records of a countenance and therefore as well of character.[82]

Much of King's audience was familiar with Lavater's theories, which quickly filtered into popular culture. In a survey of Philadelphia's *The Port Folio* magazine from 1801-1824 (the year the magazine was founded to the year King opened his Gallery), physiognomy comes up as a subject seventy-five times; sometimes a comment about a person in passing, while at other times an extensive discourse on the subject. For

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[79] He also copied Stuart's more traditional half-length portrait of the former President.
[80] Alfred L. Bush, *Life Portraits of Thomas Jefferson* (Charlottesville, VA: Thomas Jefferson Memorial Foundation, 1987) 62.
[81] Idem.
[82] Ellen Miles provides an excellent survey of the popularity and importance of profile portraits during the last quarter of the eighteenth and first quarter of the nineteenth centuries in her study of the work of Charles Balthazar Julien Févret de Saint-Mémin. Ellen G. Miles, *Saint-Mémin and the Neoclassical Profile Portrait in America* (Washington: National Portrait Gallery and the Smithsonian Institution Press, 1994).

instance, in an 1803 satirical article reprinted from the British periodical *The Looker-On*, the pseudonymous Rev. Simon Olive-Branch noted that in the present climate it must seem "extraordinary" that he had never given his readers a description of his physiognomy. And so,

> Without proclaiming, therefore, the length of my nose, or the width of my forehead, I shall give my readers the outline of my figure.
>
> I am a little pinched-up old man, and look as if I had been cased and embalmed a century and a half.[83]

The Rev. Olive-Branch's self-deprecating description bypasses physical description for sarcasm and nicely encapsulates the purpose as well as the difficulties inherent in physiognomic analysis. Authors employed satire to discuss the theory and its influence in England as well. One article at the time of Lavater's death points to his influence:

> A servant would, at one time, scarcely be hired till the descriptions and engravings of Lavater had been consulted, in careful comparison with the lines and features of the young man's or woman's countenance.[84]

The tongue-and-cheek quality of the comment speaks to the great extent to which physiognomy had permeated British popular culture, something that the Rev. Olive-Branch implies had taken place in the United States as well.

PHRENOLOGY

While King was educated in the waning years and under the influence of the Enlightenment, he opened his Gallery in 1824 in the midst of the Romantic Era. Physiognomy was a product of the Enlightenment and attempted to submit subjective,

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[83] Peter Poker, "MISCELLANY.: FROM "THE LOOKER-ON," *The Port Folio* III, 41(October 8, 1803) 324. The essay originally appeared in "The Looker-On: A Periodical Paper," written by William Roberts under the pseudonym The Rev. Simon Olive-Branch, A.M. This essay was published as *The Looker-On* Number XV (Saturday, April the 28th, 1792). John Edward Haynes, *Pseudonyms of Authors; including anonyms and initialisms* (New York, NY: Printed for the author, 1882) 81.

[84] *The Gentleman's Magazine* LXXI (February 1801) 124. Emphasis in original. Quoted by Graham, "Lavater's Physiognomy in England," 561.

emotional responses to an individual's appearance to rational categorization. Phrenology in contrast embraced the subjectivity and cultural relativism of Romanticism but tamed them through the seemingly quantifiable physical properties of the skull. Unlike physiognomy, which artists, philosophers, and theologians promoted extensively, phrenology emerged from and for several decades was embraced by the scientific community. Phrenology, which Dr. Franz Joseph Gall formally introduced in 1796 in Vienna, divides the human skull into numerous "organs," or seats of different character traits. These traits, when they are particularly exaggerated, appear as enlarged areas or pronounced "bumps" on the human head. Phrenological heads, published as charts and even as sculpted busts, denote the sites of the various organs.[85] The chart published in Orson Fowler's *The Practical Phrenologist* includes the title of each faculty, including descriptions of each term **(Figure 66)**. For instance, Firmness (No. 16) resides on the back side of the crown of the head and is qualified by the nouns "stability, perseverance, willfulness." Though the bumps could be measured and quantified, in practice phrenology embraced subjectivity and cultural relativism through their interpretation. Individual character traits could be interpreted as either positive or negative. For instance the organ of Combativeness (number 8 behind the ear) might be considered positive in a heroic soldier while "savage" in an American Indian.

Phrenology immediately captivated American intellectuals when it was introduced in the United States in the 1820s. The first phrenological lectures were held in 1822 at Charles Willson Peale's Philadelphia Museum. A phrenological society was founded that year in Philadelphia, in 1824 in Washington, and later in the decade in

[85] The first phrenological society in the United States was founded in Philadelphia in 1822. In that same year, the first phrenological lectures were held in that city at Peale's Museum. Charles Colbert, *A Measure of Perfection: Phrenology and the Fine Arts in America* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1997) 11.

Boston. Phrenology, like physiognomy, also quickly filtered out of the elite intellectual circles where it began. By 1850, phrenological theory had penetrated deep into American popular culture. Phrenological descriptions appeared in American literature with some frequency. When Herman Melville described Ishmael's first impressions of Queequeg in *Moby Dick*, he did so in overtly phrenological terms:

> He looked like a man who had never cringed and never had had a creditor. Whether it was, too, that his head being shaved, his forehead was drawn out in freer and brighter relief, and looked more expansive than it otherwise would, this I will not venture to decide; but certain it was his head was phrenologically an excellent one. It may seem ridiculous, but it reminded me of General Washington's head, as seen in popular busts of him. It had the same long regularly graded retreating slope above the brows, which were likewise very projecting, like two long promontories thickly wooded on top. Queequeg was George Washington cannibalistically developed.[86]

Phrenological heads, wooden busts that identified the location of the character-revealing bumps, could be found in many American homes **(Figure 67)**. As early as 1834, the Boston Christian Examiner wrote in obvious disapproval: "Heads of chalk, inscribed with mystic numbers, disfigured every mantelpiece."[87] Two of the most famous practical phrenologists, Lorenzo and Orson Fowler, published the *American Phrenological Journal* beginning in the 1830s, as well as countless books and pamphlets.[88] Their phrenological analyses purported to determine appropriate love and career matches as

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[86] Herman Melville, *Moby-Dick*, edited with an introduction by Charles Child Walcutt (1851; New York: Bantam Books, 1986), p. 55.

[87] A wooden bust attributed to Asa Ames c. 1850 is a particularly beautiful example. The *Christian Examiner's* comment regarding phrenological heads appeared in the context of an article titled "Pretensions of Phrenology Examined" that critiqued the first American edition of Gaspar Spurzheim's *Phrenology, or the Doctrine of the Mental Phenomena* (Boston: Marsh, Capen, and Lyon, 1832). *The Christian Examiner* (November, 1834) No. LXV, New Series No. XXXV, 267 [entire article 249-269] Cited in *American Anthem* in the catalogue entry on Ames' head. *American Anthem: Masterworks from the American Folk Art Museum* (New York: American Folk Art Museum in association with Harry N. Abrams, Inc., Publishers, 2001) Cat. No. 94; 117, 337.

[88] The *American Phrenological Journal* began publication in 1838. Stein, *Heads and Headlines*, 26. For more information on the Fowlers' publications, see ch. 3, "Phrenological Panaceas."

well as mechanisms for cultivating memory. Mark Twain spoofed the industry in 1863 by presenting himself for two phrenological analyses – once anonymously and a second time as himself. The difference in outcome was striking. In the first instance, Lorenzo Fowler found a "cavity," in Twain's words the size of "America," where the bump of humor should have been. On his second visit, this time as Twain, the cavity became a mountainous bump:

> Once more he made a striking discovery – the cavity was gone, and in its place was a Mount Everest – figuratively speaking – 31,000 feet high, the loftiest bump of humor he had ever encountered in his life-long experience![89]

While skepticism was widespread, practical phrenology remained popular into the twentieth century and the *American Phrenological Journal* did not cease publication until 1911.

Physiognomy and phrenology coexisted during the nineteenth century as approaches to defining character through countenance. They however represented different intellectual movements, physiognomy of the Enlightenment and phrenology of cultural relativism. If Lavater was more interested in individuals, Gall and in particular the influential British phrenologist George Combe and his disciple in America Charles Caldwell focused primarily on ethnic traits.[90] Physiognomy was premised on the belief that an individual's physical appearance developed alongside his or her character and therefore was not fixed at birth. Nor was Lavater particularly interested in differences between races. Cultural-racial analysis is rare within the *Essays*. Phrenologists in contrast believed that the shape of the skull was set at the time of birth. Ethnic background played a significant role in the development of the skull, though

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[89] Mark Twain, *The Autobiography of Mark Twain*, Charles Neider ed. (New York: Harper, 1959) 64ff.
[90] Reginald Horsman, "Scientific Racism and the American Indian in the Mid-Nineteenth Century," *American Quarterly* XXVII, 2 (May 1975) 162-163.

phrenologists agreed that minor shifts in character could be effected over time through the influence of education.

Dr. Charles Caldwell, the most prolific scientist-phrenologist in the United States, was himself an early devotee of physiognomy and author of the first volume of Delaplaine's *Repository*. However, he wrote his first phrenological treatise soon after the theory was introduced in the United States. Caldwell established the racial nature of phrenology clearly in his first treatise, *Elements of Phrenology* (1824), where he wrote at length about American Indians as an ethnic group.[91] In describing a cross-section of many distinct cultures, Caldwell generalized that American Indians had particularly over-developed organs of "firmness, cautiousness, combativeness, destructiveness, and secretiveness." He thus concluded that the North American Indian "race is radically and greatly inferior to that of the Whites."[92] By 1830, when Caldwell published *Thoughts on the Original Unity of the Human Race* (1830), he was ready to articulate his argument for four distinct species of man – Caucasian, Mongolian, Indian and African. Of the four, the Caucasian race was "superior to [the others] in native intellectual faculties."[93]

King began his career well before the advent of phrenological thought in the United States, but undoubtedly by the 1830s viewers were subjecting even King's earlier paintings to phrenological analysis. King's own c. 1815 *Self-Portrait* invites a positive phrenological reading, despite virtual certainty that King was unfamiliar with the theory when he developed the composition. King highlighted the area of his forehead associated with Spirituality, Imitation, Ideality, and Mirthfulness. A visitor looking at this portrait

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[91] Charles Caldwell, M.D., *Thoughts on the Original Unity of the Human Race* (New York: E. Bliss, 1830) 135.

[92] Charles Caldwell, M.D., *Elements of Phrenology* (Lexington, KY: T.T. Skillman, 1824) 239-240. The theory of polygenesis became very popular in the South in the 1840s and in particular the 1850s as a justification for slavery. Emphasis in original.

[93] Robert E. Riegel, "The Introduction of Phrenology to the United States," *The American Historical Review* XXXIX, 1 (October 1933) 73.

for its phrenological characteristics would have noted Imitation and Ideality as appropriate to King's profession as an artist. Not much is known about King's interest in religion, but visitors who wandered the Gallery and found King's trompe l'oeil paintings would have agreed that Mirthfulness was an appropriate adjective to describe him. A series of paintings on the theme of impoverished artists, at least one of which King called *Poor Artist's Closet* (c. 1815), attacked the state of art patronage in the United States with sardonic wit **(Figures 99 & 100)**. Two other trompe l'oeil paintings concealed nudes from view through the device of a false curtain and a catalogue to the collection, a cruel trick on the visitor who identified him or herself as interested in viewing the concealed image when reaching to remove the obstruction **(Figure 95)**. King also emphasized his brow line, the area where a phrenologist would locate the organs of Order; Color; Weight; Size; Individuality; and between the two brows, Form. It is hard to imagine a more positive phrenological portrait of an artist.

Considering the great interest phrenologists in the United States took in American Indians and the extent to which phrenological analysis filtered into popular culture, at least a portion of King's audience would have looked for phrenological markers in his American Indian portraits as well. King himself does not appear to have been a devotee of phrenology, and it is possible that he used phrenological analysis against its promoters, demonstrating enlarged faculties where racial stereotyping would predict a depression. The only book King owned that referred to phrenology was a collection of lectures by Dr. Thomas Sewall that refuted the theory.[94] Of all of the Indians King painted, professional and amateur phrenologists subjected the captured Sauk chief Makataimeshekiakiah (Black Hawk) to phrenological analysis most frequently **(Figure 69)**. King painted *Black*

[94] Elizabeth Newman referred to Dr. Sewall as a visitor at her home. Considering the intimacy King had with the Newman family, it is exceedingly likely that King and Sewall knew one another at least casually.

Hawk in the 1830s, after phrenology had become well known in the United States. Black Hawk was famous among Anglo-Americans for his role as leader of a group of Sauk, Fox and Kickapoo Indians in the 1832 conflict that became known as the Black Hawk War. After his defeat, the United States Army took Black Hawk and other captives across the East Coast, including to Washington, and exhibited the Indians like a circus side-show for white Americans everywhere they went. Near the end of his captivity, Black Hawk narrated his life story to a government interpreter who published an "autobiography" in 1833, which quickly became a bestseller.[95]

The vast majority of phrenological appraisals of American Indians were negative, and the 1838 study of Black Hawk that appeared in the *American Phrenological Journal and Miscellany* was no exception **(Figure 70)**. Racial presuppositions about American Indians in general came through clearly in the assessment. The author acknowledged that Black Hawk was unusually developed in areas not typically associated with Indians such as "Philoprogenativeness" (love for his children), a compliment to Black Hawk but simultaneously a disparaging generalization of other American Indians.[96] He also had "very large perceptive faculties." Strong perception was a positive trait that phrenologists did frequently attribute to American Indians. For instance, a South Carolina Volunteers officer who wrote a book about the Second Seminole War singled out this one positive trait in an Uchee Indian Chief slain in battle: the dead man's forehead "was strongly marked by the perceptive organs." His head was

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[95] *The Autobiography of Ma-Ka-Tai-Me-She-Kia-Kiah, or Black Hawk* (Cincinnati, OH: J. B. Patterson, 1833). Black Hawk's autobiography went through five printings in its first year. Kerry A. Trask, *Black Hawk: the Battle for the Heart of America* (NY: Henry Holt, 2006) 302.

[96] "Phrenological Developments and Character of the Celebrated Indian Chief and Warrior, Black Hawk," *American Phrenological Journal and Miscellany* I (1838) 54. Number correspondence: 6 (Combativeness), 7 (Destructiveness), 9 (Acquisitiveness), 10 (Secretiveness).

> one leavened mass of destructiveness and the basilar region of his brain was so spacious that every other bad quality appertaining thereto found an equal room in it, and merged all difficulties about Bumps; while the moral and intellectual organs were supposed too insignificant to merit attention – his forehead, however, though retreating, was strongly marked by the perceptive organs.[97]

The South Carolina soldier's description demonstrates how pervasive phrenological theory was and how much it colored white Americans' attitudes towards American Indians. And, much as in the description of Black Hawk, singular positive characteristics could easily be noted without tempering the overall negativity of the assessment.

Though Black Hawk may have loved his children and had the perceptive qualities necessary for leadership, the author was quick to note that the chief also was "bulging" around the ears, the locations of "Combativeness, Destructiveness, Secretiveness, Cautiousness, and Acquisitiveness." These bumps are readily apparent in the accompanying diagram's profile and head-on views.[98] Those organs could be found around and above the ear; the profile also emphasizes a very large bump at the location of No. 10, Secretiveness. In 1838 Charles Caldwell wrote an even more critical assessment:

> Black-Hawk was a chief. And had he never visited the United States, he would have been supposed and reported to be a man of talent. In truth he was so reported. But a personal knowledge of him dissipated the illusion. He was a brutal daring savage – and nothing more. The grade of his intellect was low, and

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[97] A Lieutenant of the Left Wing, *Sketch of the Seminole War, and Sketches during a Campaign* (Charleston, SC: Dan J. Dowley, 1836) 249-250, republished in *The Indian and the White Man,* ed. and introduction by Wilcomb E. Washburn (Garden City, NY: Anchor, 1964): 280.

[98] A counterpoint can be read in an 1833 reporter's assessment of Black Hawk that he had "a head that would excite the envy of a phrenologist – one of the finest that Heaven ever let fall on the shoulders of an Indian." Quoted in Cyrenus Cole, *I Am a Man, the Indian Black Hawk* (Iowa City: State Historical Society of Iowa, 1938): p. 26. The quote reappears in *Niles' Weekly Register* Fourth Series, No. 17 – Vol. VIII (June 22, 1833), p. 268, attributed to "U.S. Gaz." In 1841, Samuel Gardner Drake also quoted the same description in *The Book of the Indians,* and stated that the passage was written by "the editor of the U. States Literary Gazette, Philadelphia." The issue of the paper should be June 13, based on Drake's parenthetical comment that the deputation of Indians "visited the water works yesterday, [June 11 or 12],…" Samuel Gardner Drake, *The Book of the Indians; or, Biography and History of the Indians of North America, from its First Discovery to the Year* 1841 (Boston: Antiquarian Bookstore, 1841) 165.

> its compass narrow…. His head was not indeed flat – was not a Carib-head. But it approached that figure. His forehead was narrow, low, and retreating.[99]

A comparison of the *American Phrenological Journal* diagram and Charles Caldwell's description against Charles Bird King's portrait of *Black Hawk* highlights significant differences in attitude toward the chief. Neither King nor the diagram reflects Caldwell's description of Black Hawk as approaching "flat" in the slope of the forehead. For comparison, consider the lithograph after James Otto Lewis' *Nah-Shaw-a-Gaa (The White Dog's Son, Pottawatomie Chief)* from *The Aboriginal Portfolio* (1835) **(Figure 71)**.[100] Lewis's lack of training is responsible for some of the physical distortion. However, in the portrait Nah-Shaw-a-Gaa's head slopes so dramatically that Lewis' lack of skill simply exaggerated a trait he intended to emphasize. King's *Black Hawk* in contrast exhibits an expansive forehead, not dissimilar to his portrait of John Quincy Adams. Nor does the area around his left ear (Combativeness, Destructiveness, Secretiveness, Cautiousness, and Acquisitiveness) appear to be in any way enlarged. If anything King's portrait emphasizes the top of Black Hawk's head, the seat of Firmness, Conscientousness and Veneration. To follow the slope of the head phrenologically, it is true that Black Hawk appears lacking in Benevolence (No. 21 at the center front of his head), but in general King's portrait is complimentary.

King's background, which was steeped in the tradition of The Church of the United Brethren (Moravian), gave him a spiritual foundation for rejecting the racial determinism of phrenology.[101] The Moravian Church was an early protestant sect in Europe. It was closely associated with the Lutheran Church, but Moravians followed a

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[99] Charles Caldwell, *Phrenology Vindicated and Antiphrenology Unmasked* (New York: Samuel Colman, 1838) 73.

[100] The original portrait is no longer extant.

[101] It is unclear whether King was himself Moravian, but there is evidence that as an adult in Washington he attended love feasts with Moravians. His stepfather was a prominent member of the Moravian Church in Newport and he attended a Moravian boys' school in Nazareth in the late 1790s.

very different lifestyle, living in communal settlements and focusing on missionary work. Children frequently grew up in Boy's and Girl's Houses because their parents were traveling to serve native communities. King attended a Moravian boys' school in Nazareth, Pennsylvania in the late 1790s and while there would have become familiar with John Valentine Haidt's (1700-1780) painting *First Fruits* (n.d.) **(Figure 72)**. The term "First Fruits" refers to the first converts in the cultures with which the Moravians worked. After news of the death of an American Indian convert named Johannes reached the headquarters of the Moravian Church in Herrnhaag, Germany in 1747, the leader of the Church, Count von Zinzendorf, asked that Haidt compose a painting that recognized the importance of the first fruits of Moravian conversion world-wide.[102] Haidt went on to produce at least three more versions of the First Fruits composition, including the painting King saw in Pennsylvania. Though Haidt's technique was rudimentary, all of the paintings reflect a sympathetic physiognomic racial construction of different world cultures.[103] The individual converts are typed through their costume, but each face attempts to represent an individual. The paintings and the Moravians' missionary zeal reinforce the premise that other cultures are worth saving for God and as capable as whites of accepting and comprehending Moravian tenets. More generally, the theory of polygenesis as articulated by Caldwell was at odds not just with Moravian but with all of Christian teaching, which espouses monogenesis from Adam and Eve and negates the possibility of multi-species development.

The Moravians were not alone in their more culturally neutral attitude towards native peoples. In the eighteenth century, white attitudes towards race were more clearly

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[102] "Haidt's Painting of the *First Fruits*, 1747," *This Month in Moravian History* XVII (March 2007).
[103] Vernon Nelson, *John Valentine Haidt* (Williamsburg, VA: Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Folk Art Collection, 1966) 22.

articulated with regard to African than of American Indian descent, which was not perceived as distinct from Caucasian. Most missionary organizations held similar attitudes and neutrality had underlain the United States' assimilation policy under President Jefferson. Jefferson articulated his belief in the eventual integration of American Indians into the fabric of American society in an 1808 speech to a group of Miami and Delaware Indians:

> You will wish to live under...[our laws]; you will unite yourselves with us, join in our great councils, and form one people with us, and we shall all be Americans. You will mix with us by marriage. Your blood will run in our veins, and will spread with us over this great island.[104]

Jefferson expected American Indians to adapt to whites' civilized ways, adopting commercial agriculture and privately held land, and ultimately to blend into the fabric of American life through intermarriage and by accepting citizenship. Jefferson set forth this policy because he believed American Indians to be environmentally and not hereditarily degraded. The fact that Mohawk leader Joseph Brant's portrait hung on the level with white American and European worthies in Peale's Philadelphia Museum is a further example of the Enlightenment mentality that Jefferson espoused in his belief in American Indians' potential to assimilate into white society **(Figure 73)**.[105] In contrast, one cannot imagine Jefferson ever publicly espousing belief in the possibility of integration of African-Americans into white American society or suggesting that African-American "blood will run in our veins."

By the 1830s, when King and others depicted Black Hawk, assimilation policy was officially dead. It had proven politically inexpedient. As an increasing number of

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[104] The speech is quoted by Anthony F. C. Wallace, *Jefferson and the Indians: The Tragic Fate of the First Americans* (Cambridge, MA & London, England: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1999) 317.

[105] Mark Pingree, "From Revolutionary Patriots to Principal Chiefs: Promoting Civilization and Preserving Savagery in American Museums, 1785-1865" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California, Davis, 2003) 6.

white Americans clamored for access to land, politicians were pressured to appropriate Indian-controlled territory. In addition, by 1840 the majority of white Americans believed American Indians to be a separate and deficient race. Jefferson's words to the Miami and Delaware Indians sounded hollow during the 1830s, particularly in American policy towards the American Indian tribes who had made the greatest efforts to adapt to a white American lifestyle. The Cherokee people had moved far along the path towards assimilation in Georgia. Individual Cherokees owned their land outright rather than in common with the tribe, they had printed their language and they published their own newspaper, wore Western-style clothing and adopted Western agricultural practices. Despite these accommodations to the white American way of life, the State of Georgia with the implicit support of President Andrew Jackson forced the Cherokee off of their land and onto a reservation in the Western territory, resulting in the disastrous Trail of Tears. Phrenological racial determinism was consistent with American attitudes towards the necessary removal of American Indians from white-inhabited territories in the 1830s; the positive characterizations of King's American-Indian portraits are in contrast consistent with the late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century attitudes of Thomas Jefferson and Charles Wilson Peale, despite the fact that King painted most of his Indian portraits within an environment largely in agreement with the racial determinist theories promulgated by phrenologists.

CASE STUDY: YOUNG OMAHAW, WAR EAGLE, LITTLE MISSOURI, AND PAWNEE THROUGH THE LENSES OF PHYSIOGNOMY AND PHRENOLOGY

Both phrenological and physiognomic analysis reflected positively on King's sitters. There is no instance where King appears intentionally to have attempted to portray a sitter in a negative light. The portrait of *Wanata*, one of King's few unsuccessful portrayals, had resulted from a flawed source: James Otto Lewis's portrait

of the chief. King's positive portrayals would be unremarkable had King only displayed prominent white Americans in his Gallery; one would expect him complimentary portraits of individuals whom he held in high regard. However, King's many portraits of American Indians were equally positive in their characterizations, and this could not help but politically charge the works for at least some of King's viewers. His paintings in particular defy the negative phrenological analyses that, particularly in the 1830s and 1840s, racial determinism propagated.

The painting *Young Omahaw, War Eagle, Little Missouri, and Pawnees* (1822), whether viewed through a phrenological or a physiognomic lens, summarizes the positive connotations of all of King's portraits, both of whites and of American Indians. The painting portrays the busts of five young American Indian men and was King's sole attempt at composite portraiture.[106] King created the painting in the wake of the widely publicized and well received 1821-1822 Upper Missouri River American Indian delegation visit.[107] Though no two figures are attired or decorated in exactly the same way, the overall cohesion of the composition emphasizes sameness. The composite portrait, employed most famously by Sir Anthony van Dyck in his *Charles I* for the Italian sculptor Gianlorenzo Bernini **(Figure 74)**, gives the viewer the impression that we are looking at least in some fashion at the representation of a single entity, in this case the generalized American Indian. Though King produced portraits of eight members of the Upper Missouri River delegation for his Gallery, he only used those portraits for general inspiration for *Young Omahaw*. King replicated only one specific individual's face – the

[106] King painted over a vertical composition of a young woman wearing a large skirt. The subject of the portrait may have been Mrs. Joseph Gales, Jr., of whom King painted a half-length portrait, seated at a piano, c. 1821.

[107] The painting's title references the delegation, but unfortunately the source of the title cannot be confirmed. The first reference to the title is in 1838, when fellow painter John Gadsby Chapman entered it as such in the National Academy of Design annual exhibition. *National Academy of Design Exhibition Record*, I, 278.

figure to the far right bears clear resemblance to King's portrait of the Pawnee chief *Peskelechaco* **(Figure 75)**. His hairline, scalp roach, cleft chin, intense gaze, and the angle of his head all are consonant with the portrait of Peskelechaco that King hung in his Gallery. Only the choker and peace medal Peskelechaco wore in his portrait do not appear in the composite image; King also substituted a white fur blanket for Peskelechaco's dark-haired buffalo skin blanket.

Young Omahaw, War Eagle, Little Missouri, and Pawnees is a "composite" not just because the sum of the individual faces gives the viewer the impression of one multidirectional figure. The work is additionally a painted montage of attributes, both physiological (eyes, noses, chins) and decorative. There are strong correlations between the accessories in the individual portraits of the Indian chiefs from the Upper Missouri River delegation that King painted for his Gallery and those that King highlighted in *Young Omahaw*. The Pawnee, Oto, and Kansa Indians all wore red-feathered headdresses, long multi-colored beaded earrings, and buffalo hides when they sat to King. The Pawnees and Otoes also wore glass-bead necklaces. Only the Omahaw Ongpatonga did not wear a headpiece or elaborate earrings: he wore unembellished earplugs and a peace medal. King's portrait of the Oto chief *Choncape (Big Kansas)* features many of the decorative elements King incorporated into the composition. Choncape wore the red-feathered headdress, the beaded earrings and necklaces, a peace medal, and carried a ceremonial gunstock tomahawk. For *Young Omahaw*, King simplified the tomahawk's decorative scheme and changed the stock's color to red. He also ignored the bone headband and necklaces, as well as the specific and detailed war paint that Choncape had worn for his portrait. There is in fact nowhere in King's oeuvre, in the McKenney/Hall lithographic series, or even in George Catlin's work any

correlation to the war paint designs King uses in *Young Omahaw*. These designs appear to have been imagined and employed by King purely decoratively.

With the portraits of seven American Indians in his studio and therefore immediately within reach, King looked to only one portrait for likeness. What was it about *Peskelechaco* that captured King's interest? A physiognomic reading of *Young Omahaw* suggests that physiognomic principles may have guided King's selection of Peskelechaco as having a facial structure that would produce the effect he wished to convey in the idealized portrait. Lavater's descriptions of physiognomic properties in the *Essays* reinforce what to the untutored eye already comes across as a positive characterization. With the exception of the second from right, which presents a more complicated profile hidden in shadows, King's heads all show a remarkable balance of the different parts. In his introduction to an analysis of the different parts of the body, Lavater stated that the head must be proportioned to the body, and that the distribution of the head from forehead to eyebrows, eyebrows to nose, and nose to chin should be in balance against one another. Lavater believed that a forehead that slopes backwards demonstrates "imagination, spirit, and delicacy."[108] The profiles Lavater includes in the section on foreheads all slope backwards. Comparison against *Young Omahaw* shows that King incorporated that physical feature strongly in the left-most three heads. King's two right heads exhibit a more perpendicular form, which when combined with an arch "announces a mind capable of much reflection, a staid and profound thinker."[109] Of lips, Lavater wrote that "Full and well proportioned lips, presenting the two sides of the middle line equally well serpentined … are incompatible with meanness; they are also repugnant to falsehood and wickedness…." Of lips that "close agreeably and without

[108] Lavater, *The Whole Works,* IV, 214.
[109] Idem.

effort they indicate a character firm, reflecting, and judicious."[110] All five heads have lips that conform to these descriptions.

Lavater described the nose as "the basis of the forehead," the fulcrum of the countenance. In *Young Omahaw*, the nose is the only element that all five figures share. They bring the composition together visually, generating a rhythm as the eye passes from one face to the next. The type of nose King chose to depict was aquiline, or curved. Lavater considered an aquiline nose to be a negative trait when exaggerated, though as in so many areas of his analysis, the trait could be construed positively as well. Regarding one of the profiles in the Essays, he writes that the profile depicts a man who is "wise, honest, lively, judicious, profound and religious. The nose, perhaps expressive of confidence, is a little too much curved – but what force and penetration in the look and in the whole physiognomy [sic]."[111]

Particularly during the Early Republic, when Roman art and architecture were popular models for their evocation of American republican principles, the aquiline nose appears to have held positive connotations for Americans. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, a "Roman nose" is defined as exhibiting "a high, prominent bridge."[112] Noses with high bridges frequently appear to be hooked at their bases, thus

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[110] Ibid., IV: 310-311. The actual description of the figures is as follows: "1. This mouth promises a sagacious reservation, aptitude in business, and firmness. Here we behold the gravity of a philosopher, who weighs syllables, and is not without penetration. 2. Gives the idea of the satirical wit and lively imagination of a Sterne. I would allow him the gift of eloquence, and an energy exempt from violence. 3. Has manly courage, with a little coarseness, if you will, but is firm and sincere. Ad to that, judgment without depth, and good will without partiality. 4. Is reserved, the effect of disdain, he has vivacity, insignificancy, and the pretention of a man who is sure to strike hard blows. The under lip does not appear at all, and the upper one is scarcely perceptible. Nothing in the least like an agreeable flexion. It is a strong-bent bow ready to discharge a mortal weapon, aimed indifferently at the innocent or guilty. He must be a wicked man who has such a mouth."

[111] Ibid., IV: 305. The plate is opposite p. 302.

[112] "Roman, n.1 and adj.1". OED Online. March 2012. Oxford University Press. http://www.oed.com.ezproxy.lib.utexas.edu/view/Entry/167058?redirectedFrom=roman%20nose (accessed April 13, 2012).

inspiring the term aquiline. In the first volume of Delaplaine's *Repository*, Christopher Columbus, Alexander Hamilton, and Dr. Benjamin Rush are all described as having noses that "incline to the aquiline."[113] Contemporaries and later biographers also occasionally referred to George Washington as having an aquiline nose.[114] One Washington, D.C. observer of the Upper Missouri delegation wrote approvingly of their appearance and deportment while they were visiting the capital:

> All of them were men of large stature, very muscular, having fine open countenances, with the real noble Roman nose, dignified in their manners, and peaceful and quiet in their habits.[115]

King's inclusion of the aquiline, Roman nose in *Young Omahaw*, in this case a positive characterization, also has a parallel in scientific racism in the later text *Crania Americana* (1839) by Samuel George Morton. Morton was not a phrenologist, but he shared many phrenologists' racial-determinist outlooks. Morton, who divided humanity into four races, characterized American Indians in this manner: "marked by a brown complexion; long, black, lank hair; and deficient beard. The eyes are black and deep set, the brow low, the cheekbones high, the nose large and aquiline, the mouth large, and the lips tumid and compressed."[116] Morton describes most of the aboriginal cultures he studied as having aquiline noses. He never qualifies the characteristic negatively, though in all

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[113] Delaplaine, *Repository*, I: 17, 43, 79.

[114] The Polish nobleman Julian Niemcewics described Washington's nose as aquiline after meeting him in May 1798. Washington Irving referred to John Trumbull's portraits of Washington as having "more aquiline" profiles than Stuart's portraits, attributing the difference to Washington's relative youth at the time Trumbull painted him. Julian Ursyn Niemcewics, *Under their Vine and Fig Tree: Travels through America in 1797-1799, 1805 with some further account of life in New Jersey* (Elizabeth, NJ: The Grassmann Publishing Company for *Volume XIV in the Collections of the New Jersey Historical Society at Newark*, 1965) 84. Washington Irving, *Life of George Washington* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1857) Vol. V, 362.

[115] William Faux, *Faux's Memorable Days in America* in *Early Western Travels* Vols. 11-12 (Cleveland, OH: A. H. Clarck Co., 1904 [1823]): 49.

[116] Samuel George Morton, *Crania Americana, or, A comparative view of the skulls of various aboriginal nations of North and South America* (Philadelphia: J. Penington, 1839) 6.

cases, much as with the description of American Indians, the general tenor of his descriptions is derogatory.

King and the phrenological racial determinists manifestly saw different men when they looked at Indian chiefs. King's portraits reject the conclusions advanced through phrenology by racial determinists. Many of King's visitors, particularly into the 1830s and 1840s when phrenology swelled in popular appeal, would have looked for the protuberance of organs when visiting King's Gallery. As I have suggested, phrenology and scientific racism/racial determinism were closely aligned in the United States beginning with Charles Caldwell's 1824 publication of *Elements of Phrenology*. *Young Omahaw, War Eagle, Little Missouri, and Pawnees* did not reproduce the traits racial determinists identified as characterizing American Indians. *Young Omahaw* is an idealized portrait that attempts to evoke an entire culture through a single image, rendering the transgression even larger. Though racial determinists conceded that individual Indians sometimes displayed traits that they considered inconsistent with the race as a whole, these individuals were in their minds aberrations from the norm while King celebrated those very traits in his generalized portrait. King does however hint at imperfection in the shadowed figure second from the right. This, the only true profile, also bears the most elaborate ceremonial painting designs. Although it shares the well-proportioned lips, aquiline nose, and somewhat perpendicular brow that identify a profound thinker, the balance of the proportions is off. In particular the forehead is compressed, undermining the viewer's impression of a positive intellect. King thus equivocates somewhat in his idealization, perhaps in recognition of the opacity of Indian culture to white Americans, and in particular to those on the Eastern seaboard far from actual Indian settlements despite the delegates' visit to Washington and the frequent news reports that the *National Intelligencer* reprinted from Western papers.

From a phrenological point of view, King concentrates the viewer's attention primarily on two sections of the figures' heads: the middle temple above the center of the eye and the thick brows. On a phrenological diagram, these areas on the temples constitute "Causality," or "planning, thinking, reason, sense." The first, second and fifth heads demonstrate these bumps, which indicate the individuals' ability to participate in a civilized, intellectual society – the counterpoint to this characteristic would be an inability to plan or reason. These adjectives also are antithetical to passion-driven retaliation and combat. And indeed, none of the heads evidence an elevation of "Combativeness" or "Destructiveness," the phrenological characteristics we read associated with Black Hawk, but also absent from King's portrait of that chief. King also emphasized the *Young Omahaw* figures' brows; in all but the second-from-right figure, whose face is completely in shadow, they protrude thickly above the eyes. This portion of the skull denotes sensitivity to perception, a trait that complements Causality well.[117]

Young Omahaw, War Eagle, Little Missouri, and Pawnees both idealizes and generalizes the American Indians King met in 1821. By constructing fictional likenesses and war paint patterns, and by mixing attributes and headdresses, he produced an iconic American Indian that helped to erase the contemporary reality of the myriad Indian nations in favor of a single archtypal Indian. This sets the painting uncomfortably at odds with King's usual approach to portraiture. King represented all of his sitters with equal dignity and humanity, and captured individuality in his American Indian portraits that equals his portraits of whites despite the vast difference in the amount he was paid for his work. This is clear no matter what filter you use to read his portraits. And by exhibiting portraits of both Indians and whites within his Gallery, King visually expanded the

[117] From the side of the temple towards the center, the characteristics are Calculation, Order, Color, Weight, Size, and Individuality.

concept of Nation to include both groups, while allowing each to retain its own cultural specificity. *Young Omahaw* however demonstrates that at the same time that King recognized the humanity and individuality in his American Indian sitters, he was no more able to see them as representatives of cultures distinct from one another than were most other nineteenth-century white Americans.

CONCLUSION

Because King's Gallery of Paintings was not a portrait gallery, the portraits he included performed a variety of functions and explored multiple themes that were integral to Americans' developing sense of national selfhood. These ranged from questions of how Americans wished to be portrayed – men chose relative austerity while women preferred the more embellished and romantic British tradition – to who was an appropriate subject for the walls of a Gallery of Paintings. The Founding Fathers made frequent appearances in portrait collections, though King only portrayed some of the leading lights – Washington, Jefferson, Adams, Franklin, Patrick Henry, and Henry Lee. King proved less interested in the political celebrities of his time, with John Quincy Adams the last President he painted for the Gallery. Certainly he could have depicted others. His cousin Elizabeth Newman recorded that he visited the "President's Rooms" several times in the late 1830s and 1840s. He also painted Andrew Jackson and could have copied that portrait for his Gallery, but did not.[118] Additionally, the more austere portraits stood out while the more elaborate blended with other categories. Portraits after

[118] King painted Jackson in 1819 for Joseph Delaplaine. It is unclear when King decided to embark as a Gallery proprietor, but considering the number of paintings that date to the late 1810s and early 1820s that he displayed in the Gallery, it seems likely that he made the decision relatively quickly upon his arrival in Washington, if not sooner. Though Jackson at this time was not President, he was already an extremely popular war hero.

European masters further blurred the lines between portraiture and the other types of paintings in the Gallery.

King incorporated his many portraits of American Indians into the Gallery display as much to capitalize on local fascination with the sitters as from personal interest. The paintings' presence visualized the impact of the delegations' visits on the city of Washington, but the early exit from the collection of half of the paintings, including *Young Omahaw, War Eagle, Little Missouri, and Pawnees,* equally demonstrates the ephemeral nature of Washingtonians' interest. The delegations' visits had proven spectacles for Washingtonians, who found themselves at the center of a debate to which they had little direct exposure. This contrasted with the slavery debate that had all too local a flavor, with slave trading proceeding in the shadows of the Capitol until 1850. Significantly, in contrast to his many portraits of American Indians, only one African American appears in all of King's oeuvre, as a minor (though symbolically important) figure in the genre painting *Itinerant Artist*. King's American Indian portraits capitalized on local interest and on memories of the visits, and memorialized and idealized the most engaging and romantic of the narratives. In the process, King entered into the visual discourse of physiognomy and phrenology, grounding his work in Enlightenment theory and sentiment, while leaving the door open to other interpretations of his work.

King had different qualifications in mind for his portrait collection from those of proprietors of portrait galleries. King focused at least in part on personal relationships, as well as on the important ties individual sitters had to Washington, D.C. Many of these paintings were part of the Gallery display through the end of King's life. Visitors to Washington from around the country gave King a national audience, which could have provided him with a platform to influence attitudes towards the American political system and cultural life across the United States. However, King instead focused his

portrait display on individuals with a significant local presence, regardless of their national profile. The Washington visitors were a constant audience, and perhaps more worth courting than tourists who might visit once. Though that may be true, King's portraiture collection fit in with the overall composition of the Gallery. The subjects King displayed resonated personally with him, whether from his private relationships with portrait sitters, his preferences for specific European styles and genres, or even from self-reflexive compositions such as his ironic trompe l'oeil paintings and his self-portrait in *Itinerant Artist.*

Chapter Three – Charles Bird King's Genre Paintings: American Life Seen through the lens of Dutch Art

Charles Bird King painted few genre scenes over the course of his career. Of the paintings that King gave or bequeathed to the Redwood Library, at least 39 were original compositions but in comparison 34 were copies after Old Master paintings and 60 were original portraits. The original compositions included landscapes, still lifes, trompe l'oeil, and a number of paintings that fall under the wide rubric of "genre."[1] These ranged from a lost moralizing series that explored the destructive potential of alcohol and suggested a debt to William Hogarth's various eighteenth-century satirical series, to contemplative sentimental and moralizing genre scenes and character studies in costume, to three large-scale paintings on specifically American themes.

These three paintings – *Itinerant Artist* (c. 1825), *Rip Van Winkle Returning from a Morning's Lounge* (c. 1825), and *Interior of a Ropewalk* (c. 1840) – are the focus of this chapter **(Figures 76, 77, & 78)**. They represent a departure for King in style, subject matter, and size. They are the only genre paintings King ever produced that take up the subject of American life.[2] King drew inspiration for all three from Dutch genre painting. They are stylistic outgrowths of that tradition, akin in spirit as well as in compositional structure to the stage-like settings of nineteenth-century Scottish artist Sir David Wilkie. Seventeenth-century Dutch scenes of everyday peasant life in turn heavily influenced

[1] Unfortunately, many of the paintings have been lost, and the accession records are not always specific enough to permit a determination of whether certain paintings were original compositions or copies. In addition, King made gifts of paintings and prints informally as keepsakes to visitors during his final illness. As a result, it is impossible to create a complete accounting of the objects that were in the collection or of their subjects. However, these statistics are suggestive at the least.

[2] King's *trompe l'oeil* paintings *Poor Artist's Cupboard* and *Vanity of the Artist's Dream* both take up American themes in that they reflect caustically on the status of the artist in nineteenth-century American society. However, this is a narrower theme than the paintings that will be considered in this chapter, and will be the subject of Chapter Four.

Wilkie, though he eliminated the scatological components common to such scenes.[3] King employed the Dutch tradition filtered through Wilkie to express his views about American history and culture. Though King looked to Wilkie rather than to Dutch art more broadly for inspiration for his American subjects, he did copy a few paintings by Dutch artists for his Gallery, including *The Chemist* after Gabriel Metsu and a "*Rustic Scene"* after Nicholaes Berchem. Dutch artists such as David Teniers (the Younger) and Adriaen Brouwer were noticeably absent from King's study print collection and Gallery. The one painting King copied by Adriaen van Ostade, *Smoker and Card Player*, probably derives from a print in King's collection titled "Tavern Scene" **(Figure 79)**. If this painting, now lost, depicted peasants at leisure, it was the only painting in King's Gallery to have done so.

Other original compositions, known only from titles today, suggest that King looked to sentimental French and British genre scenes for inspiration. For works such as *Butterfly in a Storm. Frightened Young lady, Girl Reading a Love Letter by Lamp-light*, and *The Young Dragoon*, King appears to have looked to the same tradition that influenced Sir Joshua Reynolds in his portrait studies of children such as *Gipsey Boy* and *Strawberry Girl*, both of which engravings King copied for display.

Itinerant Artist, Interior of a Ropewalk, and *Rip Van Winkle Returning from a Morning's Lounge* were large for King's Gallery, all approximately 3 ½ x 4 ½ feet.[4] Though King presented other artists' monumental history paintings as special exhibitions, he did not work in that scale himself. Only once did he produce a work larger than approximately 3 ½ by 5 feet, a copy from a work by Renaissance Italian painter

[3] As far as we know, based on the extant works and reasonable assumptions from titles of missing paintings.

[4] *Interior of a Ropewalk* was the smallest (39 x 54 ½ in). *Itinerant Artist* (44 ¾ x 57 in.) and *Rip Van Winkle Returning from a Morning's Lounge* (44 x 56 ½ in.) were almost identical in size, not surprising since King likely painted them at about the same time.

Bonifazio Veronese which came to the Redwood with the title *The Concert…Forming part of the Painting Called the Rich Man's Feast* (approximately 75 by 40 in.) **(Figure 80)**.[5] The three genre paintings under discussion were among a group of eight paintings that were, aside from the copy after Veronese, the largest paintings on display. These works, which included three copies of history paintings, two lost works which from their titles appear to have been sentimental genre scenes, and the three American genre scenes under discussion here, therefore stood out from the paintings surrounding them in the floor-to-ceiling installations common in the nineteenth century. [6]

George Watterston's 1842 *A New Guide to Washington* indicates how a nineteenth-century visitor experienced King's Gallery. His description of the first-floor installation emphasizes the diversity of the display:

> The lower room contains about one hundred fine paintings, consisting of portraits, landscapes, fancy pieces, &c. Among these the most beautiful, are the following: Nos. 2 and 3, Landscapes; Nos. 22 and 27, beautiful portraits of the Misses S----; No. 18, the Environs of Milan; No. 19, an admirable and spirited head of a Drunkard; No. 30, "I am not mad," very fine; No. 56, the Itinerant Artist; No. 58, Rip Van Winkle's reception by his wife after his morning lounge, &c.

Watterston does not list the various categories of paintings present in the collection in any particular order, nor does the numbering of the collection appear to follow any sort of division into categories. Portraits (Nos. 22 and 27), for instance, were interspersed between character studies (Nos. 19 and 30). The numbering system suggests that King

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[5] This measurement is an approximation based on a photograph in the collection of the Redwood Library collection (P.182A) that shows the painting hanging on the reading room wall at some point in the late nineteenth century. The measurement is based on comparing the size of the painting with that of the dimensions of Gilbert Stuart's portrait of *Christian Stelle Banister and Her Son, John* (36 x 30 in.), which at that time hung at the side of *The Concert.* King referred to the painting as "from Bonifaccio."

[6] The history painting copies were *Telemachus and Mentor, Shipwrecked on the Isle of Calypso* after Benjamin West; *Venus Endeavoring to Prevent Adonis from Going to the Chase, on the Day He was Killed by Mars* after Titian; and *Ceyx and Alcyone* after Richard Wilson. The two other original compositions were: *"I Will Be a Soldier." Little and Gun, and Old Man with Wooden Leg;* and *Bust of Dead Mother. Two Young Ladies and Little Boy Contemplating It.*

arranged his display to take best advantage of the wall space, with a secondary emphasis on the way that different paintings related to one another within the display. The cadence of Watterston's description is furthermore suggestive of the content of the viewer's experience. He moves quickly from landscapes, to portraits, to a European scene, to two character studies, to what appear to be pendant paintings – No. 56 and No. 58, *Itinerant Artist* and *Rip Van Winkle Returning from a Morning's Lounge.*

Itinerant Artist, Rip Van Winkle, and *Interior of a Ropewalk* all are horizontally oriented and employ relatively shallow, stage-like settings for the activities of the characters. *Itinerant Artist* and *Rip van Winkle* in particular reinforce one another visually and I believe were pendants. *Interior of a Ropewalk* was produced later, which may account for the slight difference in canvas size. However, the overarching compositional similarities, in combination with the American subject, argue for its inclusion with the earlier paintings as an informal trilogy that captures King's understanding of the American past, present, and future.

As its title indicates, *Rip Van Winkle Returning from a Morning's Lounge* derives from American literature. It is as a result not a genre painting in the technical sense of the term. The painting nonetheless blurs the parameters between the categories because King only uses Washington Irving's story "Rip Van Winkle" for inspiration; he does not focus on the narrative. Instead, King provides the viewer a glimpse of the family's mundane life on one of the many days Rip Van Winkle has squandered his time and energy by loafing rather than providing for his family. Irving's story provides the framework for the painting's focus, since the characters become recognizable through the title, but King's purpose in producing this painting was not to recount the narrative but rather to establish a scene of domestic ruin that could serve as a counterpoint to the success of *Itinerant Artist's* pioneering family. Irving's story also provided King with the

means for constructing a political argument, pitting the Dutch-American colonial world against the republican advances of the early United States. That world is literal in the sense that it has a historical setting in the years surrounding the American Revolution. It also exists outside of time as a fictional literary construction, in particular because of the supernatural quality of Rip's fateful sleep.

Interior of a Ropewalk is also fictional, but in this case the image presents a falsehood about the present. King depicts a working ropewalk: an assistant turns the wheel as spinners backing their way down the ropewalk twist hemp into yarn in one of the early stages of ropemaking. Yet the scene is selective; mechanization of any type is noticeably absent at a moment when the production of rope in the United States was changing irrevocably away from an artisan-based system to a mechanized industry. King's nostalgic depiction of the artisanal tradition sentimentalizes the ropewalk and constructs an innocent, wholesome history for what was in reality a rough and tumble business.

Itinerant Artist is no less ambitious in its construction of an American present and future than *Interior of a Ropewalk* and *Rip Van Winkle* are in their construction of past and present. In this work, a surrogate for King himself enters the home of a pioneer family on the American frontier in the guise of an itinerant artist. The painting, like the others, employs tropes from the Dutch tradition, notably still life and humor. These components however are peripheral to King's primary focus, which is the role the arts play in the gradual improvement of taste and refinement in the growing American population. The matron of the family, sitting for her portrait in the center of a log cabin and surrounded by her family, presents the face of the future of the democratic republic.

Itinerant Artist and *Rip Van Winkle* were early essays in the genre tradition in the United States. Their importance might appear to pale in the face of the growth of genre

painting as a category during the second and third quarters of the nineteenth century, but at the time King painted them he anticipated the trend. In order to better understand King's place within the genre tradition in the United States, and the significance of his compositions, we first will look backward in time to genre painting in the Early Republic, and then study King's American triptych.

GENRE PAINTING IN THE EARLY REPUBLIC

The substantial body of literature related to American genre painting focuses on the category's importance from the late 1820s onward, typically beginning with the career of William Sidney Mount.[7] It is correct to say that its popularity with audiences increased along with the opportunities for display in the 1830s. However, the critical reception of German-American artist John Lewis Krimmel's contributions to the annual exhibitions of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts (PAFA) showed as early as the 1810s that Americans would embrace genre painting. In particular, a critic for the Philadelphia-based and Federalist-leaning magazine *The Port-Folio* argued at that time that Krimmel's genre paintings expressed appropriately American republican values. Charles Bird King, who knew Krimmel, would produce genre paintings similar to Krimmel's in style and sensibility a decade later and was only the second artist to embrace genre painting as a mechanism for exploring specifically American themes.

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[7] The most nuanced survey of American genre painting is Elizabeth Johns' *American Genre Painting: the Politics of Everyday Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991). An earlier work, *Mirror to the American Past: A Survey of American Genre Painting: 1750-1900* (Greenwich, CT: New York Graphic Society, 1973) by Hermann Warner Williams provides an overview of the way in which American genre paintings historically were studied and employed by art historians – as illustrations and commentary on our past, rather than as fabrications of the moment. Other useful titles include *American Stories: Paintings of Everyday Life, 1765-1915* (Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2009) and Henry Nichols Blake Clark, "The Impact of Seventeenth-Century Dutch and Flemish Genre Painting on American Genre Painting, 1800–1865," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Delaware, 1982) as well as a variety of monographs on American genre painters including John Lewis Krimmel, Thomas Hovendon, Charles Deas, William Sidney Mount, Eastman Johnson, and George Caleb Bingham.

Scottish artist Sir David Wilkie was a pivotal influence on both Krimmel and King. Wilkie, born in 1785 in Fife, Scotland, was King's contemporary. Though he, like King, traveled to London in 1805 to finish his artistic training, unlike King he found fame almost immediately when he exhibited *Village Politicians* at the 1806 Royal Academy annual exhibition **(Figure 81)**. Wilkie's successes continued with his exhibition of *Blind Fiddler* in 1807 **(Figure 82)** and *Rent Day* in 1809, all of which take the British lower classes as their subjects.[8] Wilkie looked to the works of artists such as David Teniers (the Younger), Adriaen Brouwer, and Adriaen van Ostade, all of whom were seventeenth-century Dutch painters who depicted peasants at work and play. However, Wilkie's paintings are almost completely devoid of the scatological and erotic elements of Dutch subjects that might be offensive to British or American audiences. According to the critic for *The Port Folio*, *Blind Fiddler* gives

> all the character and finish of Teniers without his vulgarities. His pictures are equally interesting to the learned and ignorant – they are faithful, chaste, and dignified representations of nature, conveying at the same time pleasure and instruction.[9]

King responded to Wilkie's popularity with a rural scene of his own while he was in London, a painting of a country inn whose signpost bears the name "CB King."[10]

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[8] *The Jew's Harp* was the first engraving after Wilkie, published in 1809. *Blind Fiddler* was published in 1811. The next print published after Wilkie, was *The Village Politicians,* in 1814. Thus, at the time Krimmel copied *Blind Fiddler,* it was one of only two images by Wilkie possibly available to him, and the only painting of complexity. Krimmel unlikely was familiar with Wilkie's work more broadly. He spent a brief time in London in 1809 en route to the United States, but Wilkie's work was not publically accessible outside of the Royal Academy shows. If he attended the Royal Academy 1809 exhibition, Krimmel would have seen Wilkie's *The Cut Finger* (1808-1809), another interior genre scene. This seems likely, since Krimmel exhibited a painting of that name at the 1814 PAFA annual exhibition. See footnote 13 below. William J. Chiego, organizer, *Sir David Wilkie of Scotland (1785-1841)* (Raleigh, NC: North Carolina Museum of Art, 1987).

[9] "Review of the Third Annual Exhibition of the Columbian Society of Artists and Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts," *The Port Folio* II, 2 (August 1813): 139.

[10] This painting is in a private collection in England. Personal correspondence between the owner and Andrew Cosentino and a photograph of the work shared with the author by Cosentino provides a date of

King also witnessed Wilkie's popularity in the United States through the success of his friend and fellow artist John Lewis Krimmel (1786-1821). Krimmel immigrated to Philadelphia from the small town of Ebingen, Württemberg in 1809. Krimmel, who was primarily self-taught, exhibited soon after he began painting in 1810. While we do not know how well Krimmel and King knew one another, they as well as Rembrandt Peale met at Thomas Sully's Gallery in an informal sketching club in December 1812. Both also enrolled in January 1813 in a life drawing class sponsored by the Society of Artists and held at the PAFA. Their contact was frequent enough that we may be sure that King was familiar with Krimmel's work and relatively certain he would have been aware of the extensive reviews of his colleague's submissions.[11]

Krimmel's first submission to the PAFA, in 1811, included *Pepper Pot, a Scene in the Philadelphia Market*, perhaps the first painting of everyday life on an American theme **(Figure 83)**.[12] The next year, which coincided with King's return from London, Krimmel exhibited a copy after Wilkie's *Blind Fiddler* as well as an original composition titled *Quilting Frolic* **(Figures 84 & 85)**. Krimmel painted genre scenes throughout a brief career tragically cut short when he drowned in 1821.[13] In the 1822 annual

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1806. This identifies the painting as one of King's earliest projects in England, and as a direct response to Wilkie's immediate popularity.

[11] Sully noted in his journal in December 1812 that he, Krimmel, Rembrandt Peale, and Charles Bird King were meeting to sketch together. Professor of anatomy John S. Dorsey taught the 1813 life drawing class in which Krimmel and King enrolled. Considering their friendship, and that King's own submissions to the PAFA/Society of Artists exhibition were reviewed in the same essay with Krimmel's, it is reasonable to assume that King and he were well-acquainted both personally and professionally. Thomas Sully, Journal of May 1792-1846, New York Public Library (Archives of American Art, microfilm); Minutes of the Society of Artists, January 6, February 24, 1813, Peale Papers, microfiche 6:A-2.

[12] For a more extensive biography of Krimmel, see Anneliese Harding, *John Lewis Krimmel: Genre Artist of the Early Republic* (Winterthur, DE: Winterthur, 1994). *Pepper Pot* was unlike any of the other paintings Krimmel exhibited that year. The other works were titled *Celadon and Amelia*, *Aurora*, and *Raspberry Girls of the Alps of Wirtemberg in Germany.* Harding, *John Lewis Krimmel*, 16.

[13] In 1812, Krimmel exhibited *View of Centre Square on the 4th of July*, *The Contrast*, and *The Accident.* In 1813, he exhibited *Blind Fiddler* after Wilkie and *Quilting Frolic.* The PAFA records indicate that Krimmel identified *Blind Fiddler* as a "sketch in oil." In 1814, he exhibited *Village Tavern (arrival of the post with news of peace, 1815 – an unfinished picture)* and *The Cut Finger.* In 1816, Krimmel exhibited

exhibition, which took place after Krimmel's death, the PAFA displayed eight works by the artist, seven of which were scenes of everyday life.[14]

The twenty-page review of the 1813 PAFA annual exhibition in *The Port Folio* devoted over ten percent of the critique to Krimmel's two submissions. The reviewer focused primarily on Krimmel's copy of *Blind Fiddler*, arguing that Wilkie's style and subjects were particularly suited for American culture. He based his approval on Wilkie's adaptation of seventeenth-century Dutch genre painting for British audiences, an approach the reviewer also considered suitable to the American context. The subject of *Blind Fiddler* is the performance of a blind, itinerant musician in the home of a rural British family. The fiddler travels with his family: his wife, who cradles a swaddled baby, and his son who warms his fingers by the fire. A working-class mother and father, a grandfather, and five children make up the audience. Their clothing is neither stylish nor neat, and their spartan dinner consists of a few carrots, potatoes, cabbage, and oysters (a still life element common in Dutch genre painting). The house has a rough-hewn wooden floor, few furnishings, and no decorations hang on the wall excepting a crude childish drawing of a man with a sword pinned to a chest of drawers. Though this family is poor, the juxtaposition with the fiddler's indigent family casts a positive hue on the simple comforts of a warm home. The fiddler's family has escaped the cold momentarily, but they have no warm home to which to return; the two sacks the fiddler

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Victory upon Lake Champlaine – McDonnough receiving the sword from the British Lieut. and *Election Scene, State House in Philadelphia;* in 1820, *Country Frolic and Dance* and *A Dutch Country Girl;* and in 1821, *Cherry Woman and Children.* Anna Wells Rutledge, *Cumulative Record of Exhibition Catalogues: The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, 1807-1870; The Society of Artists, 1800-1814; the Artists' Fund Society, 1835-1845* (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1955) 116.

[14] After Krimmel's death, in 1822 the PAFA exhibited *Female Head Decorated with flowers* after *Helsch, The Return from market, sketch in oil; The Honey Pot, sketch in oil; Going to market – the disaster, &c., sketch in oil; Sweeps Importuning for cold provision, &c., sketch in oil; The Country Wedding; Children robbing the honey pot;* and *The punishment- The honey pot upset, and the mother laying about her vigorously.* Idem.

has laid at his side identify the family as transient. Wilkie is sympathetic to his characters; he takes seriously the fiddler's intense concentration, the listening children's rapt attention to his performance, and the gestures of the energetic happy baby who responds to her father's dancing. Though the families may appear jumbled together at first, they actually are juxtaposed, with the fiddler clustered together with his wife and children facing the other family. The fiddler's family is presented to the viewer as pitiable; the rural family, in contrast, despite their obvious economic burdens, is not. Rather, the bright white aprons and caps worn by the mother and baby draw the viewer's eye to a touching scene of parental affection, and overall Wilkie's composition is cheering to the viewer.

Wilkie was a Tory, and his paintings reflect a conservative political agenda. This was an important element of the artist's success in England, where rapid industrialization at the beginning of the nineteenth century, in concert with the enclosure of land and the restrictions on communal grazing rights, created rural and urban working-class unrest.[15] In England, Wilkie was acclaimed for his ability to impart character to his subjects, a quality evident in *Blind Fiddler*.[16] Through Wilkie's characterizations, middle or upper class viewers could take heart that these people despite living in squalid conditions were content with their lot in life and were not a threat to the status quo.

This was a comforting notion to American viewers as well, particularly for members of the waning Federalist Party who feared the increasingly vocal and politically active democratic masses. By reading the image as an evocation of working-class

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[15] David Solkin, *Painting Out of the Ordinary: Modernity and the Art of Everyday Life in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (London: Yale University Press, 2008) 28-29. For more information on the impact enclosure had on the British poor, see Edward Palmer Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1964) especially 213-219.

[16] Nicholas Tromans, *David Wilkie: Painter of Everyday Life* (London: Dulwich Picture Gallery, 2002) 14-15.

domestic harmony, the reviewer for the Federalist-leaning *The Port Folio* lauded Wilkie's conservative message:

> The subject is one of those that daily occur in the simple walks of common life; it is delineated with truth and elegance, and exhibits without affectation, the comforts and happiness of domestic life – [17]

"The comforts and happiness of domestic life" does not appear to describe either family depicted in *Blind Fiddler*. However, it aligns the reviewer's politics and social outlook to those of Wilkie's conservative British patrons. The painting's political expression comes through in the characters' acceptance of their lot in life. Their lower-class status also is the painting's most concrete connection to seventeenth-century Dutch genre painting. In neither culture did the lower-class individuals who were portrayed purchase paintings. The absence of any art, even prints, from the homeowner's walls underscores the fact that the artist painted for a middle or upper-class viewer.[18] It is therefore not surprising that Wilkie constructed a scene that buoyed confidence in the status quo by contrasting the fiddler's abject poverty with his audience's spartan comforts. *The Port Folio* critic ended his commentary with a political judgment: "we believe his school of painting is well fitted for our republican manners and habits, and more likely than any other to be appreciated at present."

Krimmel paired *Blind Fiddler* with *Quilting Frolic*, contrasting a pointedly contemporary British work with his own original American scene. *The Port Folio* review does not compare the two paintings, other than to note that Krimmel intended them to be companion pieces, but the visual echoes are undeniable. The paintings are the same size

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[17] William C. Dowling provides an excellent overview and literary analysis of *The Port Folio's* early years in *Literary Federalism in the Age of Jefferson: Joseph Dennie and The Port Folio, 1801-1812* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina, 1999).

[18] In the case of *Blind Fiddler*, the patron was aristocratic. Sir George Beaumont commissioned the painting in 1806. Tromans, *David Wilkie*, 54.

(16 ¾ x 22 in), portray domestic interiors, and both include a wide variety of individuals of different ages.[19] Krimmel conforms to Wilkie's diorama-like interior space, derived from seventeenth-century Dutch paintings, as well as to the inclusion of disparate still life elements in the foreground. These are compositional qualities King would adopt in his own paintings as well. The paintings' contents further echo one another. Each features a grandfather standing in front of a centrally placed fireplace and mantle. Fiddlers provide entertainment, and face off across the canvases (seated at left in *Blind Fiddler* and standing at right in *Quilting Frolic*), though Krimmel's fiddler provides background music for a party while Wilkie's fiddler is the primary subject.

Where he presents a British working-class subject in his copy of *Blind Fiddler*, Krimmel depicts the emerging American middle class in *Quilting Frolic*. This distinction is evident in many ways, from the difference in dress to the family's material possessions. Stripped of furnishings and accessories, the two homes would not appear all that different from one another. Aside from a finer mantle, the spaces are practically identical. However, the contexts could not be more different. Through the highlighting of goods the poverty of the working-class British family is transformed into a successful American frontier family. The prints on the wall showcase a love of country through the sea battle scenes flanking the portrait of George Washington and a love of family in the form of the pendant silhouettes that hang underneath. The china, the china cabinet, the standing clock, and the multiple servants all speak to the rural family's high level of engagement in the American market economy, and the many young people crowding the room attest to the exuberant growth of the nation.[20] Indeed this energy, most evocatively contrasted

[19] Milo M. Naeve, *John Lewis Krimmel: An Artist in Federal America* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1987) Cat. 2 & Cat. 3, 68-73.
[20] Anneliese Harding advances a similar argument in Harding, *John Lewis Krimmel*, 41.

through the quality of the music – intense and contemplative in *Blind Fiddler* and light and festive in *Quilting Frolic* – forms the basis for the differences in atmosphere between the two scenes.

Krimmel executes a none-too-subtle transferral of class and context from the British to the American subject. American artists did not embrace the lower classes as subjects for genre paintings the way the Dutch did. Seventeenth-century Dutch painting was a complex web of subjects and styles that spanned the extremes from boorish behavior of the lower sorts to refined upper-middle-class courtship scenes. American artists, in contrast, worked within a far narrower range of subjects. They focused primarily on what were then called the "middling sorts," who would coalesce into the middle class over the course of the nineteenth century. Paintings such as Krimmel's *Quilting Frolic* highlight the social and economic potential of American society in the nineteenth century. The United States was a young country, both the nation and the age of the populace. According to the 1820 United States Census, 50% of white males were under the age of 18, and 33.8% were under the age of 10.[21] Krimmel highlights the bright future of the United States by focusing on the large crowd of young people who fill the room. In the process, he also neutralizes a potentially politically dangerous figure – the frontier American. In the early nineteenth century, Americans emigrated to newly opened territories in great numbers, upsetting the historical balance of power on the East coast. This was of particular concern to the Federalist publishers of *The Port Folio*, who feared the leveling brought about by the enfranchisement of the democratic masses.

[21] Out of a total of 3,972,165 Caucasian males, 2,142,431 (54%) were under the age of eighteen. 1,344,263 (33.8%) were under the age of 10. *Census for 1820* (Washington: Gales & Seaton, 1821) 18.

ITINERANT ARTIST AND RIP VAN WINKLE RETURNING FROM A MORNING'S LOUNGE – AN AMERICAN MORALITY TALE

Charles Bird King became the second American artist to embrace genre painting when he produced *Itinerant Artist* and *Rip Van Winkle Returning from a Morning's Lounge* in the 1820s. King intended for his two paintings to be seen together. In 1842, George Watterston listed *Itinerant Artist* and *Rip Van Winkle* as Nos. 56 and 58 in the downstairs exhibition space of King's Gallery, evidence that they could be found in close proximity.[22] The paintings' scale announced the importance of the genre themes to his visitors, as they were among the largest paintings on view in the Gallery, each approximately 44 x 56 inches. King is known to have executed only one painting in a larger size format, a copy after Bonifazio Veronese's *Rich Man's Feast*, approximately 70 x 35 in. The paintings' scale, then, announced their importance to his visitors.

The catalogue numbering suggests that *Itinerant Artist* (No. 56) appeared either above or to the left of *Rip Van Winkle* (No. 58), a visual schema that supports reading the pendant works as a morality tale, albeit a tale in reverse. The paintings' many shared compositional traits further reinforce their joint message. The paintings do not present identical stages on which "good" and "evil" dramas play out, but share enough visual correlations to ensure that the viewer would compare the domestic spaces and fortunes of their inhabitants. This strategy mirrors Krimmel's similar juxtaposition of the British *Blind Fiddler* with his American scene *Quilting Frolic.* In contrast to Krimmel however, King presents two New World scenes, one grounded through literary fiction in the Dutch Colonial past and the other in the American present. In both of the houses King depicts, the door to the exterior is at the far left of the main living space, a set of stairs is at the back left, and a bedroom appears at the back. An open beam divides the main living

[22] George Watterston, *A New Guide to Washington* (Washington: Robert Farnham; New York: Samuel Colman, 1842) 102.

space at the level of the rafters. King focuses the viewer's attention on the families' possessions, in particular a hutch by the door in *Rip Van Winkle* and neatly arranged vessels on top of the mantel in *Itinerant Artist*. Though obviously different homes, the structural differences between the buildings are minor: the door against which Rip Van Winkle leans does not lead directly outside, as does the frontiersman's door; the hearth shifts in location from one painting to the next; and Rip's home possesses a stairwell in contrast to the open staircase in *Itinerant Artist*.

The major shift in tone and message appears in the context of the families' lives, and in the conditions of their homes. *Itinerant Artist* is an exploration of commerce and of the rural family's integration into a national and international market economy. Every visible element of the home is a commentary on the family's place within the economic system – their current socio-economic situation, their history, and their aspirations. In contrast, *Rip Van Winkle* presents us with a colonial period Dutch-American family that lives in advance of the American democratic system that the *Itinerant Artist* positively represents, and which embodies the antithesis of productive citizenry. Though the visual display reverses the traditional morality tale format, it simultaneously follows a chronological path from colony to nation and celebrates the potential for self-improvement in the United States.

Itinerant Artist portrays a middle-aged painter putting the finishing touches on the portrait of a rural matron. The woman, as important to the composition as she is to the running of her household, sits at the center of a rural dwelling, family and servants arrayed around her. The main portion of the home – the large room in which all the action takes place – appears to be the original log cabin built by the family when they moved to the frontier. The room we see in the background is, in contrast, more finished. The floorboards running perpendicular to those in the main room reinforce the impression

of a later addition, as does the clapboard siding visible out the window to the far left of the main room, by comparison to the wide hewn logs just outside the doorway.

King catalogues an extensive range of goods and possessions, some homemade but most purchased. Three legs of drying meat and two animal pelts hang from the rafters, presumably the product of the husband's hunting forays. Melons are arrayed in the foreground, and a woman at the right-hand side of the canvas prepares a cabbage for supper. Outside of these natural elements, and the structure itself, the family does not appear to be involved in the production of the artifacts of daily life. Rather, the view out the back window of trees and fields suggests that this is a farming family. Their crop provides the capital for their finished-goods purchases. The family's clothing is one salient example of the importance and pervasiveness of the market economy around 1825. Family members wear red, pink, blue, green and brown clothing made of varied materials. No spinning wheel appears in the home, and it is almost certain that the materials for if not the finished clothes themselves were purchased and not hand-made. The purchase of fabric was already so prevalent during the colonial period that the mere act of producing homespun cloth became a political act in the wake of the 1767 Townshend Act.[23] An observant visitor to King's Gallery would have recognized that the two young women in yellow wear dresses in the Empire style, which was slightly outdated by the mid-1820s, but that the lower waistline of their mother's dress reflects more up-to-date fashion with its controlled corseted silhouette.[24] The viewer also would have noted the silk waistcoat worn by the artist, a finer and more formal material than required by the setting. The clothing served as a reminder that Americans living on the

[23] T. H. Breen, "'Baubles of Britain': The American and Consumer Revolutions of the Eighteenth Century" in *Past & Present* 119 (May, 1988) 93.
[24] Linda Baumgarten, *What Clothes Reveal: The Language of Clothing in Colonial and Federal America* (New Haven, CT & London: Yale University Press for The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 2002) 221.

frontier were both part of the highly developed market economy, and not terribly different in their tastes and desires from their urban counterparts.

If *Itinerant Artist* depicts a family walking the path of republican self-improvement, *Rip Van Winkle Returning from a Morning's Lounge* presents the viewer with a family in ruin. In 1819, Washington Irving began serial publication of *The Sketchbook.*[25] This, his second major work, brought together essays and stories related to the United States and to England as recounted by the pseudonymous Geoffrey Crayon, an American traveler in England. Crayon identifies "Rip Van Winkle" and "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow," both of which were inspired by the history of New York State, as having been found among the effects of Diedrich Kickerbocker (the ostensible author of Irving's first successful work, *A History of New York,* 1809) at the time of his death.[26] In an early American example of Gothic fiction, the story employs a supernatural conceit as a device to enshroud recent history in mystical shadows. Literary historian Robert D. Hume has written that "where realism is not the desired object – and it is not in the Gothic novel – supernaturalism seems a valid enough device for removing the narrative from the realm of the everyday. And this the Gothic novels clearly try to do."[27] The young man Rip, a husband and father of two, is a carefree but hapless loafer. On one of his jaunts into the mountains to escape his nagging wife, Rip falls asleep, only to awaken to the strange appearance of a little man carrying a cask. Rip follows him, and finds himself in the presence of Hendrick Hudson, who is bowling ten pins with his crew. After sneaking a drink from the cask, Rip falls asleep again, and when he awakens he discovers that he has

[25] Irving published the American edition of *The Sketchbook* serially from June 23, 1819 to March 15, 1820. The British edition appeared in two volumes in 1820.
[26] "Rip Van Winkle" appeared in the first installment of the American edition. "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" appeared in the sixth and final installment.
[27] Robert D. Hume, "Gothic versus Romantic: A Revaluation of the Gothic Novel," *PMLA* LXXXIV, 2 (March 1969): 284.

grown a long beard and that his rifle has rusted. He returns to town in confusion, only to discover that the town itself has changed. His home has been destroyed, his wife and friends are gone, and the head of a stranger, George Washington, has replaced George III at the sign of the village tavern. Rip's long sleep is more than simply a plot-driver. It creates a sense of timelessness since it is unclear to Rip how long he has been asleep, and the supernatural quality of the event further distances it from linear real time. When Irving wrote *The Sketchbook*, the American Revolution was still part of the relatively recent past, having ended forty years before. The supernatural and inexplicable events in many of Irving's stories take hold of the historical time in which the action takes place and transform it into timeless legend. Irving thereby establishes through literature a long history of British and Dutch occupation of the new world, eliding present with past and validating the potential of American myth.

King's *Rip Van Winkle* is the only known visualization of this scene of Rip as a young man, returning home as he often did after a day of unproductive loafing, and one of the earliest painted responses to Irving's story. It is also one of the first paintings inspired by a work of American literature. By choosing to portray a scene from a story grounded in the American past, and doing so just after the story was published, King celebrates the development of a literature American both in authorship and in theme. The specific event King portrays – a scene of Rip as a young man – places the scene toward the colonial period, though when exactly is unknown. King, then, follows Irving in elongating American colonial history beyond its circumscribed bounds. King's depiction is faithful to Irving's characters, but without the title it would be difficult to connect the painting with Irving's story because King focuses on an insignificant moment from the narrative. By neutralizing the story line, King highlights Irving's character descriptions and the accouterments of everyday life in the Van Winkle home. Other artists would

focus on the young man Rip falling asleep, his realization that something is amiss when he awakens, or his return as an old man to the village.[28] King converts a literary theme into genre by ignoring the more famous moments; instead we find ourselves in the midst of a domestic squabble.

Irving never describes Dame Van Winkle's appearance, instead focusing on her character, more than once describing the "daring tongue of this terrible virago" who abused her husband from morning until night.[29] "Virago" derives from the Latin *vir*, meaning man. In the nineteenth century, Noah Webster defined the word as either a "female warrior" or "a bold, impudent, turbulent woman; a termagant."[30] Without pardoning Rip himself, Irving apportions some of the blame for the family's condition to Dame van Winkle's overbearing masculinity and general bad humor. King captures her hostility and mean-spirited character in his painting. Rip's wife wields a broom, worn almost completely to the nub, with which she gestures violently towards her husband.

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[28] Henry Inman produced the earliest known painting illustrating "Rip Van Winkle," *Rip Van Winkle Awakening from his Long Sleep* (c. 1823). Inman enlarged the painting to monumental scale for the steamer Rip Van Winkle, where it appeared outside the wheelhouse. Years later, Inman painted the popular actor James Henry Hackett in the role of Rip Van Winkle as an old man (c. 1831). John Quidor painted two versions of Rip as a young man in *Rip Van Winkle at the Tavern* (c. 1829, 1839) and as an old man in *The Return of Rip Van Winkle* (1840). Other artists who focused on Rip as a young man included Anna Leslie (Charles Robert Leslie's sister), who painted *Rip Van Winkle Going Up the Hill* (1827) after a design by her brother; O. B. Loomis, who exhibited *Young Rip* in 1836; and Asher B. Durand, who exhibited *Rip Van Winkle's Introduction to the Crew of Hendrick Hudson* in 1838. Tompkins H. Matteson painted Rip as an old man in *Rip Van Winkle's Return* (1860). A. D. O. Browere exhibited pictures titled *Rip Van Winkle* in 1833 and 1839; the earlier painting, now at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, depicts Rip's return. Jacob H. Lazrus exhibited *Rip Van Winkle* in 1843; the portion of the narrative he selected is unknown. Finally, Thomas Cole created a drawing of the scene of *Hendrick Hudson and his Crew at Ninepins*, but he never turned it into a painting. For more information on this subject, see Jules David Prown, "Washington Irving's Interest in Art and His Influence Upon American Painting" MA Thesis (University of Delaware, 1956) particularly 63-68. See also William H. Gerdts, *The Art of Henry Inman* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution for the National Portrait Gallery, 1987); and Christopher Kent Wilson, "John Quidor's *The Return of Rip Van Winkle* at the National Gallery of Art: The Interpretation of an American Myth," *The American Art Journal* XIX.4 (Autumn, 1987) 23-45.

[29] Washington Irving, *The Sketchbook of Geoffrey Crayon, Gent.* (London: John Murray, 1822) 65.

[30] The adjective "termagant" also appears in the story. Noah Webster, *An American dictionary of the English language.*.. (New York: S. Converse, 1828) II, n.p.

Even the dog, perhaps due a portion of the blame as Rip's constant but unstalwart companion (he stands between his owner's legs in King's painting), feels her wrath; "at the least flourish of a broomstick or ladle, he would fly to the door with yelping precipitation."[31] As for the protagonist, Rip nonchalantly leans against the doorway, following Irving's description of his reaction to his wife: "Rip had but one way of replying to all lectures of the kind, and that, by frequent use, had grown into a habit. He shrugged his shoulders, shook his head, cast up his eyes, but said nothing."[32]

Dame Van Winkle's clothes are tattered and she sits on the back of a chair, the wicker seat of which has broken. In fact, the Van Winkle home is littered with broken furniture, including a small bed whose posts lean inward towards the mattress and a wobbly spinning wheel that lies abandoned against a wall. Even more critically, the building itself is falling into ruin. The wall between the two downstairs rooms has almost completely eroded, leaving one side and the lintel of the door hanging useless, while a long pole bends beneath the weight of the support beam in the kitchen. A single post at the bottom of the stairs is the relic of a banister. The domestic disarray transfers blame for the family's distress from Rip to his wife and is King's only departure from Irving's text, for Crayon notes "to tell the truth, Dame Van Winkle had always kept [the house] in neat order."[33] In contrast, Irving described Rip's farm in terms that echo King's depiction of the interior: "His fences were continually falling to pieces; his cow would either go astray, or get among the cabbages; weeds were sure to grow quicker in his fields than anywhere else… it was the worst conditioned farm in the neighborhood."[34]

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[31] Irving, *The Sketchbook*, 62.
[32] Ibid., 61.
[33] Ibid., 77.
[34] Ibid., 60.

Rip is one of Irving's Dutch-American mock heroes, following in the footsteps of Wouter Van Twiller, Peter Stuyvesant and Hendrick Hudson.[35] Knickerbocker describes Van Twiller, Governor of New Amsterdam, as

> of such a profoundly reflective turn, that he scarcely ever spoke except in monosyllables, yet did he never make up his mind on any doubtful point…. [H]e always conceived every object on so comprehensive a scale, that he had not room in his head to turn it over and examine both sides of it, so that he always remained in doubt, merely in consequence of the astonishing magnitude of his ideas![36]

Irving's satirical language pervades *The History of New York* in such a way that the reader appreciates Knickerbocker's affection for his hapless protagonists. Martin Roth has written that Knickerbocker "fight[s] furiously to create a Golden Age in the present, to redeem America from history."[37] Unfortunately Knickerbocker, Irving, and the reader all know that there is no successful exit for the Dutch Americans. British America will win the day.

Similarly, in "Rip Van Winkle," as well as in King's painting, we feel empathy for Rip while simultaneously recognizing that his lifestyle is unsustainable, and according to post-Revolutionary American cultural standards, indefensible. The family's distress becomes all the more clear when juxtaposed to the model frontier family and home in *Itinerant Artist*. Whereas all is in disarray in *Rip Van Winkle, Itinerant Artist* is the picture of domestic economy. The floors, though rudely hewn, are clean; all of the family members wear clean and intact (not tattered) clothing. An obvious distinction can be made between the dilapidated state of Rip's dwelling, and the warm home the frontier family has erected. Indeed, while the house crumbles around Rip, the rear of the

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[35] Hudson was an English explorer, but in the employ of the Dutch East India company when he explored North America.

[36] Washington Irving, *Knickerbocker's History of New York, Complete* (Middlesex: The Echo Library, 2007) 80.

[37] Martin Roth, *Comedy and America: The Lost World of Washington Irving* (Port Washington, NY: Kennikat Press, National University Publications, 1976) 127.

Itinerant Artist home is new construction. The cross-beams at an angle from the main room provide one clue to modern eyes, but the location of the hearth on the back wall, and nineteenth-century descriptions of the ways in which homeowners enlarged their spaces as time and finances allowed, further supports that reading. King's viewers would have recognized the addition as such and understood the implied prosperity, reinforced by the statement made by the portrait in progress.

Telling a Story through Dutch Tropes

King uses the tropes of Dutch painting, in particular humor and emblematic symbolism, to bring *Itinerant Artist* and *Rip Van Winkle* into conversation with one another. *Itinerant Artist* is playful while *Rip Van Winkle's* satire is biting. Much of *Itinerant Artist's* humor stems from the interaction between the artist and the old woman who critiques his work. Amusing on its own, the scene takes on added humor when the viewer realizes that the itinerant artist is none other than Charles Bird King himself. Comparison of the portraits in King's *Self-Portrait of the Artist at Thirty* (1815) **(Figure 68)** and *Itinerant Artist* dates the latter to the early to mid-1820s. In the earlier work, King records the receding hairline that, a decade later, leaves the pate of the itinerant artist completely bare. King's contemporary viewers would not have required access to his self-portrait to connect him with the subject. They knew that they had the itinerant artist in their midst. As proprietor of the Gallery, a professionally successful and socially prominent member of Washington society, and artist in residence in the studio that abutted the exhibition space, King was a well-known and visible presence. He also was the antithesis of the itinerant artist type. In fact, though King, like most other American artists of his generation, spent his early professional years traveling in search of commissions, he spent extended periods of time in major cities and not on rural

farmsteads. It is unlikely that King ever found himself in the circumstances he depicted in *Itinerant Artis*t.[38]

For the last century, art historians have employed *Itinerant Artist* repeatedly as an illustration of the depths to which painters were forced to stoop in search of commissions in nineteenth-century America.[39] This story line, though not at all the message King intended, is consistent with the attitude towards patrons that he expressed in a series of trompe l'oeil paintings that focused on an artist's possessions. King produced at least three different iterations on this theme, two of which have survived: *Poor Artist's Cupboard* (c. 1815) and *Vanity of the Artist's Dream* (1828) **(Figures 99 & 100)**. The autobiographical nature of the trompe l'oeil paintings, which follow an artist's descent into poverty as a result of a dearth of patronage suggests a compelling story line made more so by the fact that King used his own likeness for the portraitist in *Itinerant Artist.* Why would an artist subject himself to the indignities to which he is subjected in *Itinerant Artist* outside of sheer necessity? King provides an answer to this question within the message of the painting itself, reinforced by its relationship to *Rip Van Winkle.* An astute visitor to the Gallery would have recognized the serious political and cultural message the work conveys alongside the humor imbedded in the humble surroundings in which the classically trained and well-to-do artist finds himself. As the rural family grows and prospers, the arts are part of the influence of the market economy that will

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[38] King returned to the United States in 1811 and settled initially in Philadelphia. However, he spent time in Baltimore, MD; Washington, DC; and Richmond, VA before settling permanently in Washington in 1818. Andrew J. Cosentino, *The Paintings of Charles Bird King (1785-1862)* (Washington, DC: National Collection of Fine Arts, 1977) 26-38.

[39] Studies that have used *Itinerant Artist* in this way include: Barbara Groseclose, *Nineteenth-Century American Art* (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000) 26-27; *Meet Your Neighbors: New England Portraits, Painters, & Society, 1790-1850,* Caroline F. Sloat, ed. (Sturbridge, MA: The University of Massachusetts Press for Old Sturbridge Village, 1992); Hermann Warner Williams, *Mirror to the American Past: a survey of American Genre Painting: 1750-1900* (Greenwich, CT: New York Graphic Society) 142.

refine manners and habits of Americans of all backgrounds. Humble though the surroundings may be, King's presence advocates support for the visual arts necessary to the education of republican Americans.

While King made a good-natured joke at his own expense through the painting, its subject was quite serious in its suggestion that the arts had a positive and ennobling effect on the American spirit and that they were a part of education that would take place as Americans became more prosperous. King reinforces the seriousness of his commitment to the idea that the arts played and would continue to play an important didactic role by employing humor to integrate a story from classical history into the composition. He thereby established a correlation between Ancient Greece and the United States. The artist finds himself the captive listener to an old woman, possibly the sitter's mother, who critiques his painted bonnet. This mini-drama within the composition rewards King's classically educated viewer by evoking the Greek story of Apelles and the cobbler. As Pliny the Elder recounted the story in his *Natural History*, Apelles habitually displayed his finished paintings to the public and concealed himself to listen to their comments. One day while concealed, Apelles heard a passing cobbler criticize his depiction of a sandal; the artist had omitted a strap, which he then proceeded to paint. Upon passing the following day, the cobbler was pleased to see that the artist heeded his comment and was emboldened to fault the artist's portrayal of a figure's leg as well. Apelles emerged to tell the cobbler to "stick to his last," in other words to confine his opinions to subjects about which he was knowledgeable and to leave aesthetic expression to the artist.[40] Similarly, King places his crone's hand in a gesture that suggests her comments are reserved to the sphere of her knowledge – in this case bonnets – while opening the door

[40] Pliny the Elder, *Historia Naturalis* XXXV, 36, 79-97.

to the possibility that she may not limit her critique to that subject. Indeed, the artist's reaction, recoiling from his critic and from the canvas, hints as much. King further encourages his viewer to reflect on his role not only as the itinerant artist at work on the portrait but as the artist responsible for creating the larger work by placing the tip of his brush on the right arm of the crone, the very arm she uses to gesture at his canvas. He is her creator, and thus the creator of his critic.

Humor, which played an important role in seventeenth-century Dutch painting, always served a didactic purpose. The ruin of an entire family was a common visual trope in seventeenth-century Dutch genre painting. Humor's moralizing role is clear in one of the best-known visualizations of a family in decay, Jan Steen's *Dissolute Household* (1661-1663, Victoria and Albert Museum) **(Figure 86)**.[41] In this painting, as in *Rip Van Winkle*, all share the blame for the family's dissipated condition though unlike King's painting the Dutch family is wealthy. The husband flirts with a buxom young woman, probably a prostitute, and leers out at the viewer in defiance as his wife, probably intoxicated, sleeps at the table. One of her sons picks her pocket, while the family dog noses meat carelessly left on a platter on the floor. A household servant dances to the tune of a musician rather than going about her work, and playing cards lie strewn across the floor, along with the shells of consumed oysters. Interestingly, Steen includes his own portrait in *Dissolute Household*, much as King depicts himself as the itinerant artist. In Steen's case, the artist portrays himself as the lecherous husband. Unlike Steen's painting, which contains all of the elements of the story within one canvas, King's morality tale follows the format of British artist William Hogarth's eighteenth-century popular serial prints such as *A Rake's Progress* **(Figure 87)**, for it requires both *Rip Van*

[41] For the analysis of *Dissolute Household* that follows, I have relied on H. Perry Chapman, "Jan Steen's Household Revisited," *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* XX, 2/3 (1990-1991) 192.

Winkle Returning from a Morning's Lounge and *Itinerant Artist* in order to convey the message.

Rip Van Winkle's entire family exhibits signs of moral decay. Each member for one reason or another incurs the viewer's reprobation. The son, were he to exert himself, might have made up for some of his father's failings. Instead, Irving tells us,

> His son Rip, an urchin begotten in his own likeness, promised to inherit the habits, with the old clothes of his father. He was generally seen trooping like a colt at his mother's heels, equipped in a pair of his father's cast-off galligaskins, which he had much ado to hold up with one hand, as a fine lady does her train in bad weather.[42]

In King's painting, the son lies on the floor in shredded clothes, and blows a bubble out of a pipe. His lethargy contributes to the dilapidation around him. His sister, who leans on a small turned table, has as well lost any ability to emote, unable even to express passing interest in her brother. The license King takes in depicting the dilapidated home implicates Dame Van Winkle equally with her husband in her family's disgrace.

The presence of the bubble in *Rip Van Winkle* derives directly from the Dutch emblematic tradition, where bubbles symbolize vanitas, the fragility of earthly existence.[43] This was not the first time King had employed the bubble motif. He exhibited a painting titled *Children and Bubble* in the 1813 PAFA/Society of Artists exhibition with the accompanying verses:

> "Philosophers, like children, sometimes choose,
> "To chase the bubble and the substance loose."

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[42] Irving, *The Sketchbook*, 61.

[43] In the first English translation of Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia*, the only inclusion of a soap bubble appears in Plate CLXI, which bears the lines: "O vain minds of men, by what Folly art thou led!/ The sum of life is short: pale death spares no one." In this plate, designed by Gottfried Eichler, Death presides on a throne over symbols of the world. Beneath his outstretched scepter, Father Time blows bubbles over a cushion that supports a papal tiara, a royal crown, a scholar's fur hat, and military regalia. The bubbles in this case reflect the extent to which everything that is of the world is vanity.

The painting is lost, but the reviewer describes the composition as featuring a cat who sits on a table and watches the bubble's progress.[44] Seventeenth-century Dutch painters Gerrit Dou and Frans van Mieris both painted compositions of boys blowing bubbles. In Dou's painting *Still Life with a Boy Blowing Soap-Bubbles*, (c. 1635, National Museum of Western Art, Tokyo), a boy holds a straw and a shell with soap and contemplates a still life composition that contains both an hourglass and a skull **(Figure 88)**. Van Mieris' painting *A Boy Blowing Bubbles* (1663, The Hague, Mauritshuis) is subtler **(Figure 89)**. The boy in the foreground blows bubbles into a shell filled with soapy water, but there is no other overt cue to the morality tale, such as a skull. Nonetheless, the viewer cannot help but reflect on the ephemeral nature of bubbles – the bubble furthest to the right is so large that it appears ready to burst – and life. King's 1813 lines refer to the futility of bubbles by contrasting them directly with "substance."

Though the clues are there without knowing the subject, the literary theme makes it easier to interpret the morality tale. We as viewers and readers may feel a certain amount of sympathy for the plight of Rip's family, but we are forced to recognize that their unwillingness to assume appropriate social roles is as much the source of their disgrace as Rip's rejection of his proper role. In Irving's story, Dame Van Winkle is part of the problem, but the larger issue is the unsustainability of the Dutch-American tradition that the mock-hero Rip Van Winkle represents. It is indeed ironic that King employs the Dutch mode to represent the failings of Dutch-American culture. Rip's

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[44] "Review of the Third Annual Exhibition," 137. In his biography of King, William Dunlap comments that King returned home from England with a painting of "girls and the cat," which probably refers to this work, considering King exhibited *Children and Bubble* just over a year after his return to the United States. Dunlap, *History*, III, 29.
John Neal recorded seeing another painting by King that included a bubble when he was in London in 1824. The subject was "a boy stealing fruit from his sister, whom he was amusing with a soap-bubble, which he was holding over the plate with one hand, while he drew away the fruit with the other." Neal, "Observations on American Art. Selections from the Writings of John Neal," ed. Harold E. Dickson, *Pennsylvania State College Bulletin* 37 (February 5, 1943) 55.

confrontation with George Washington's head, an image for which he has no context and which consequently is illegible, reinforces that there is no place for him within the new order. In comparing King's two paintings, the differences between the productive nineteenth-century Anglo-American pioneers and the unproductive eighteenth-century Dutch Americans is stark. The frontier father's exit from the home is humorous, but it is also affirming. He appears driven from a changing domestic scene that he cannot understand or control, but it is a positive development for the family. His hard work has provided the opportunities and bounty of a happy home. In comparison to Rip's empty-handed return home, the frontier father sets out with his rifle and powder horn and the evidence of the skins and meat hanging from the rafter suggest that a successful foray is likely. The sons are active. One attempts to draw, based on the example set by the artist in their midst. The other whittles an arrow. Whether intended for hunting or for play, the action is productive – skill with the bow and arrow will translate later to skill with a rifle.

Taking Portraiture to the Frontier: King's Use of the Log Cabin in Itinerant Artist

One of the keys to understanding the political message of the *Itinerant Artist* is the design of the log cabin itself, which identifies the family as close to but not quite on the frontier. Mountain foothills appear in the distance through the bedroom window, but the location of the scene is generic; it could be Southern or Northern. The presence of a young African-American woman in the foreground could, but does not necessarily, locate the scene in the South. Though it is unlikely that King ever encountered a log cabin in his travels up and down the East Coast and even less so that he found himself in the context he depicts, the accurate and detailed portrayal of the building reinforces King's positive characterization of the family.

Many nineteenth-century descriptions of log cabins have survived, and they follow the same paradigm: settlers built cabins as single rooms with a door and no windows and later finished them out with windows and with the addition of other rooms. King's log cabin is consistent with period descriptions; it is an aggregate building that characterizes the family that built it as industrious and moving along a trajectory towards prosperity and away from the frontier. In reminiscences of his youth in the 1850s on the Oregon frontier, G. W. Kennedy described his family's first home:

> My father's [cabin] was quite pretentious, twenty feet by thirty feet, and we called it "Home" with a great deal of pride when we moved into it. That log cabin had no floor at first, but had a large fireplace chimney at one end, and Oh! what fires we used to have. Two doors, one on each side, slabs nailed together. When the doors were shut, a large bar was put across each to insure protection. When chinked and then plastered with clay, they were very comfortable houses. It was not a modern mansion, I am sure, all living, sleeping and cooking in one room.[45]

A basic log cabin, such as that described by Kennedy, required only an axe to chop down the trees and to notch the ends of each log, allowing them to sit close together and eliminating need for nails. The builder then patched small gaps between the logs with mud or clay to prevent drafts and to keep out bugs. Builders with the time and interest might as in the case of the *Itinerant Artist* cabin hew the logs, squaring off two or four sides before constructing the building to ensure a tighter fit.[46] In his 1828 *Dictionary*, Noah Webster wrote that a hewed square timber was not called a log, "unless perhaps in the constructing of log huts…."[47] In other words, the twenty-first century image of a "Lincoln-log cabin" constructed of unhewn logs, was not universal – a hewn log could be

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[45] G. W. Kennedy, *The Pioneer Campfire in Four Parts: With the Emigrants on the Great Plains; With the Settlers in the Log Cabin Homes; With the Hunters and Miners; With the Preachers on the Trails, at Camp-Meetings and in the Log Cabins* (Portland, Oregon: Clarke-Kundret Printing Co., 1914) 51.

[46] See Clinton A. Weslager, *The Log Cabin in America: From Pioneer Days to the Present* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers UP, 1969) 15.

[47] Webster, *An American dictionary*, II, entry No. 1 for "Log", n.p. Quoted in Weslager, *Log Cabin in America*,15.

and frequently was employed.[48] Wooden floors were common but not requisite. Many cabins, such as Kennedy's, initially had dirt floors. The wooden floor in *Itinerant Artist*, rude though it is in the main room (the planks are somewhat smoother in the addition) is another indication of the family's ambition in not settling for a dirt floor. On the interior, settlers frequently built lofts to accommodate their expanding families above the great room's rafters. Finally, it was not uncommon for a family to add to the cabin; cutting out a door was no more difficult than cutting a window. This formula was relatively static from the first introduction of the log cabin in the eighteenth through the successive waves of Western expansion of the nineteenth century.

Webster had a consistently negative view of log cabins. His definition of a log cabin, "A small house, hovel or cabin; a mean lodge or dwelling, a cottage," reflects a derogatory attitude common during the Early Republic; the celebration of log cabins as symbols of American independence and of the hardy frontier family emerged only in 1840 with William Henry Harrison's "Log Cabin and Hard Cider" presidential campaign.[49] Earlier, log cabins were referred to repeatedly as rude structures. When authors during the Early Republic described the inhabitants of log cabins positively, they highlighted the unlikely juxtaposition of upstanding individuals to their circumstances. In describing "An Original Character" for the *Alexandria Herald* in 1823, a

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[48] Lincoln Logs were a twentieth-century invention created by John Lloyd Wright. Though Wright was inspired by his father Frank Lloyd Wright's Imperial Hotel in Tokyo, the toy's name derives from the life of Abraham Lincoln, who lived in a log cabin as a child. "Lincoln Logs," *Dictionary of American History*, ed. Stanley I. Kutler, Vol. 5, 3rd ed. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 2003) 109.

[49] Robert Gray Gunderson provides an excellent history of the 1840 Presidential campaign in *The Log-Cabin Campaign* (Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Press, 1957). A Democratic reporter attacked William Henry Harrison during the campaign by writing: "Give him a barrel of hard cider, and settle a pension of two thousand a year on him, and my word for it, he will sit the remainder of his days in his log cabin by the side of a 'sea coal' fire, and study moral philosophy." The Whig party turned the comment to their advantage. They successfully presented Harrison, a Hampden-Sidney College graduate in "Belles letters" who lived in a mansion constructed around the core of a log cabin, as a frontiersman-populist. The quote was made by correspondent "Z" (John de Ziska) in the Baltimore *Republican*, December 11, 1839, and is quoted in Gunderson, *The Log-Cabin Campaign*, 74.

correspondent named Richard Andrews Ripley wrote of a man living in South Carolina in a "rude log cabin" as

> Hospitable, well read, full of anecdotes and elated when company broke the scenes of his solitude…. In the little log house, which with difficulty could be singled out from the numerous log cabins that surrounded it, we constantly found the richest viands for body and mind, the massive plate upon the rickety cross legged pine table, the choicest collection of English and French literature on the coarsest, clumsiest shelves.[50]

The article's date places it within a year or two of *Itinerant Artist* and is suggestive of the attitudes King's visitors would have held about log cabins in the mid-1820s. The contrast between the refinement of the man and the setting creates the story.

The improved log cabin of *Itinerant Artist* provides a great deal of information about the industry and aspirations of the assembled family. The home bears the markings of originating as a single-room log cabin – the one large window at left likely was cut out and framed after the basic structure's completion. Windows required glass, which was expensive and not considered necessary to the home in its initial function. Captain Basil Hall, an English naval officer, visited Georgia in 1827 and inquired of a man who had just built a log cabin about the absence of windows. The man said that he could not afford glass windows yet, but that he hoped within a year to be able to do so, and at that point he would cut the holes.[51] The shapes of the logs from which the *Itinerant Artist* family constructed the cabin appear unmistakably on the exterior through the open door. These are hewn logs, more work than strictly necessary for a functional log cabin and a sign of the family's industry and aspirations. The plastering of the interior walls and the wooden floors are both also signs of the family's drive. Together they emphasize the fact that the building was constructed in two phases. The plaster is darker in the main cabin

[50] Richard Andrews Ripley, Esq., "An Original Character," *Alexandria Herald* (April 14, 1823).
[51] Captain Basil Hall, *Travels in North America in the Years 1827 and 1828* (Philadelphia: Carey, Lea, & Carey, 1829), II, 257. Quoted in Weslager, *The Log Cabin in America*, 18.

than in the addition as a result of the rooms' relative ages and of smoke from the large fireplace, and the wooden floor is both ruder in the main room (the planks are somewhat smoother in the addition) and perpendicular to that in the addition. Considering that many log cabins had dirt floors, the presence of wooden floors in any form was a visual cue. Finally, the types of doors and windows on the cabin speak to the location of the home away from the frontier and from hostility from either outlaws or displaced American Indians. This is a warm and comfortable home, not a fortress outpost.

Though log cabins seem to us today to be the quintessential early American structure, the form was only introduced by Swedish and German immigrants in the eighteenth century, and never was utilized in the early colonial period by British immigrants. King required an engaged viewer to fully understand *Itinerant Artist's* message when he first displayed the painting in the 1820s. Most Americans at that time would have had a negative reaction to the log cabin itself. The next twenty years however saw the log cabin as an idea transformed into a national icon symbolizing democratic independence and patriotism. Historians began to speculate that log structures were the original homes of British colonists.[52] In an 1827 history of Dedham, Massachusetts, Erastus Worthington wrote that because the early homes in Dedham were "constructed by farmers, not by mechanics, [they must have] been very rude and inconvenient. They were probably log-houses."[53] In 1841, Reverend Alexander Young wrote in Chronicles of the Pilgrim Fathers that the pilgrims' houses were "probably log-huts, thatched, and the interstices filled with clay."[54] In actuality, every immigrant group

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[52] Harold R. Shurtleff, *The Log Cabin Myth: A Study of the Early Dwellings of the English Colonists in North America,* Ed. Samuel Eliot Morison (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1939) 211.

[53] Erastus Worthington, *The History of Dedham: From the Beginning of its Settlement in September 1635 to May 1827* (Boston: Dutton and Wentworth) 13. Quoted by Shurtleff, *The Log Cabin Myth,* 188.

[54] The comment appears as footnote commentary in Young's transcription of Governor William Bradford and Edward Winslow' "Journal of the Plantation at Plymouth." Reverend Alexander Young, *Chronicles of*

that moved to the colonies followed their own home country's architectural styles when at all practicable. Swedes and Germans from forested areas built log cabins not because the American environment was suited to the style, but because they did so at home as well. By eliding the actual history of American dwellings and locating the log cabin in seventeenth-century British colonial settlements, nineteenth-century historians claimed for British-American history a product that was not British in origin, and that was employed instead by lower-class immigrants. The Irish, seen as disreputable particularly in the mid-nineteenth century due to the many immigrants fleeing the potato famine, had adopted the log cabin style for frontier homesteads when they moved to the forested West in the late eighteenth century. So complete was the re-imaging of the log cabin by the middle of the nineteenth century that Henry A. Wise, Governor of Virginia, inaccurately described the first buildings at Jamestown as log cabins at the 250th anniversary of the founding of the settlement:

> Here the Old World first met the New. Here the White Man first met the Red for settlement and colonization. Here the White Man first wielded the axe to cut down the first tree for the first log cabin. Here the first log cabin was built for the first village….[55]

In fact, the first log cabins in Virginia appeared more than 100 years after the founding of Jamestown, and then in the western part of the colony and not in Jamestown. William Henry Harrison's 1840 presidential campaign only crystallized a movement that was already well under way.

As the nineteenth century progressed and Americans' embrace of the log cabin as quintessentially American solidified, King's message through *Itinerant Artist* became

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the Pilgrim Fathers of the Colony of Plymouth, from 1602 to 1625 Second Edition (Boston: Charles C. Little and James Brown, 1844) [1841]: 179.

[55] Barton H. Wise, *The Life of Henry A. Wise of Virginia 1806-1876* (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1899) 35. Quoted in Weslager, *The Log Cabin in America*, 99.

simpler to decode. The nuances remained, but the viewer did not need actively to connect the clues to the family's democratic spirit and drive towards self-improvement, for those characteristics had become inextricably intertwined in the symbol of the log cabin. The family is poised on the edge of the wilderness and stepping into civilization, a movement that the mother's portrait will further through its symbolism of respectability and the prosperity that makes such discretionary spending possible. Though the layout of the spaces in *Itinerant Artist* and *Rip Van Winkle Returning from a Morning's Lounge* are similar, Rip Van Winkle emphatically is not set in a log cabin. The stone floor in the foreground, the rounded picture window in the back, the large overhanging mantle on the fireplace, and the stairs to a second floor identify the structure as a Dutch-American house, appropriate to the story's cultural context.[56] The architectural frameworks of the two compositions reinforce the polarized dynamic between the narratives and reading the images as pendants increases the complexity of their individual messages. Though many Dutch-American houses were well constructed, the home King depicts was not; the dissolving interior wall is made of thin vertically positioned planks, and echoes the many pieces flimsy furniture that lean sideways; in comparison, there is a solidity to every component of the pioneer family's home.

Playing with Race – The African-American in Itinerant Artist

King portrayed an African-American only once in his career, in *Itinerant Artist*, in which a young black woman sits just to the left of the center of the canvas at the feet of the frontier mother. The woman's status is ambiguous, though not so much so that the viewer identifies her as anything other than a servant. However, whose servant, and is she a slave or free? That this is King's only portrayal of an African-American suggests

[56] Kevin Stayton, *Dutch by Design: Tradition and Change in Two Historic Brooklyn Houses* (New York: Brooklyn Museum in association with Phaidon Universe, 1990) 61-62.

that in his mind at least, the painting required her. Whether or not this is true, the geographical ambiguity of the setting and the work's physical location (King's Washington, D.C. Gallery) place the young woman in an identity limbo controlled by the white viewer's beliefs and preconceptions.

African-American figures appeared with some frequency in nineteenth-century American genre paintings. Though some artists imbued their figures with more character than others, the contexts depicted consistently identified African-Americans as lower class and primarily as having identities in some way predicated on the whites with whom they share scenes. Rarely do African-Americans appear as independent actors in control of their own destinies. Elizabeth Johns has noted that not only do blacks appear "only in relation to whites" but also that interestingly artists only depicted one per picture. Furthermore white artists depicted African-Americans as all conforming to a single type, "generally dark, well dressed…and cheerful," and gave them an overt or implied lower status in comparison to the whites around them.[57] King's depiction of the young black woman is consistent with other such portrayals in that her identity is contingent on the white people who surround her. In fact, it is precisely because King denies her a clear role that she becomes a fulcrum for understanding the narrative's geographical and cultural contexts. She could be slave or free, have arrived with the artist or be a member of the frontier family. By using a model and not constructing a caricatured abstraction, King paradoxically further impedes our determination of who the woman might be. She is both a real person, someone King found to pose for him in Washington, and a fictional character. She looks back at the painter inquisitively, her mouth half-open as if about to speak, and her expression is the least theatrical of all of the characters arrayed before the

[57] Johns, *American Genre Painting*, 103.

viewer.[58] At the same time, King conforms to Romantic conventions for depicting Others by baring her right shoulder, something he does not do with the other female figures in the painting.

John Lewis Krimmel frequently included African-Americans in his genre paintings in the 1810s, but his work does not conform to the standard representational structure Johns establishes for whites' depictions of African-Americans. The African-Americans he depicted were frequently the protagonists in his compositions and their identities were not conditional to their relationship to whites. One of the paintings Krimmel displayed the first year he submitted to the PAFA annual exhibition (1811) depicted an African-American street vendor.[59] *Pepper Pot: A Scene in the Philadelphia Market* portrays a group of people eating a traditional Philadelphia street food, pepper-pot soup. As in this case, African-American women customarily hawked the soup. This was one of Krimmel's first oil paintings, and the composition betrays his lack of skill in many ways. Perhaps most obvious is the confusion of scale between the different figures. Two young women, an elderly man and woman, the pepper-pot vendor, a young mother with her son, and a dog all share the perspectival space comfortably. However, to the right-hand side of the canvas, two well-dressed young women who consider whether they would like to partake of the soup are in a completely different and smaller scale; the boy comes up practically to their chests, and the mother would tower over them should she stand up. The man who, despite standing behind them, is double their size increases the young women's awkwardness. Aside from Krimmel's challenge in producing a complex composition in scale, *Pepper Pot* shows that he had not yet mastered the anatomy of the

[58] The frontier father's expression as he looks back over his shoulder is similar in tone to King's portrait studies of actors, including *Conscience Makes Cowards* (n.d.), in which the wild-eyed sitter dramatically arches his eyebrows as he looks away to his right.

[59] He had other submissions that year: *Celadon and Amelia*, *Aurora*, and *Raspberry Girls of the Alps of Wirtemberg*. Harding, *John Lewis Krimmel*, 16.

human body and in particular of facial structure and that he was unsure how to convey his message with any subtlety. The individuals as a result are caricatures, in particular the elderly and seemingly destitute Revolutionary War veteran and the pepper-pot vendor, whose flat nose, wide smile, lank hair, and rounded face all conform to nineteenth-century artists' less-nuanced depictions of African-Americans. Despite all of these failings, the facts that this is the first American-themed genre scene and that its central figure is African-American sets it apart from other, later genre paintings.

Krimmel never again composed an oil painting with an African-American protagonist. However a survey of his body of work demonstrates that his interest in African-Americans did not wane over time, although his attitude towards blacks may have changed. He painted four small watercolors of Philadelphia street scenes featuring African-American laborers and included numerous African-Americans in supporting roles in his more formal oil genre paintings.[60] The pepper-pot vendor is friendly with her customers, smiling slightly as she scoops a bowl of soup, but she does not fawn or gape foolishly as do the African-American characters in Krimmel's later paintings. Indeed, as Krimmel's white faces became more naturalistic, his African-American figures became more caricatured. In *View of Centre Square on the Fourth of July* (c. 1812), Krimmel included an African-American boy in the foreground and a well-dressed African-American couple in the background **(Figure 90)**. In all three cases, he elongated and exaggerated their faces, giving them wide, red, smiling lips. The oil painting *The Quilting Frolic* (1813) and the watercolor *Merrymaking at a Wayside Inn* (1811-c. 1813) (**Figure 91)** both feature African-American fiddlers who play for white audiences.

[60] The watercolors were: *Elegant Couple Meets Chimney Sweeps in Front of Christ Church* (late 1811-early 1812), *Oyster Barrow in Front of Chestnut Street Theatre* (c. 1812), *Black People's Prayer Meeting* (1813), and *Black Sawyers Working in Front of the Bank of Pennsylvania* (late 1811-early 1812). These paintings, which all appear in Annelise Harding's *John Lewis Krimmel,* suggest that Krimmel was interested in the everyday lives of African-Americans.

Krimmel caricatures the musicians: the whites of their eyes, elongated earlobes, and exaggerated lower lips are their most prominent features.[61] Krimmel's watercolors all had a sketch-like quality that communicated an immediacy and authenticity to his viewer, encouraging the takeaway that Krimmel was both observant and interested in the African-Americans who surrounded him in Philadelphia. However, the characters in these paintings are also are subject to blatant racial typing. In particular a participant in the foreground of *Black People's Prayer Meeting* dances with his hands over his head in a gesture that is undeniably simian **(Figure 92)**. Krimmel's characterization of an African-American community gathering as a spectacle to be witnessed rejects the idea that it was peopled by human beings who had lives and values to be respected.

William Sidney Mount, the best-known American genre painter in the 1830s and 1840s, had a very different approach from Krimmel's. Though he as well depicted African-Americans in situations that connected them to whites, he imbued them with identity and substance that was unusual for the time period. *The Power of Music* (1847) is a case in point **(Figure 93)**.[62] The black listener, separated from the whites inside the barn, stands outside the barn door to listen to the fiddle's song. He does not pose a threat. His stance is relaxed and he is completely engaged in the sounds of the fiddle. Mount emphasizes the man's status as an outsider through his location literally outside the door, as well as through his worn, patched clothes, and the jug (presumably of alcohol) that he

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[61] Johns does not discuss any of the paintings that feature African-Americans prominently, but of *Quilting Frolic* she writes: "both a young black serving girl and a tattered older male fiddler grin broadly as they provide the means for much of the pleasure of this gathering of a white family, and in election scenes he painted in the teens, African-Americans are prominent exemplars of drunkenness and other disorderly behavior." Johns, *American Genre Painting*, 104.

[62] It took Mount some time to develop these complex characterizations. He likely drew inspiration from John Lewis Krimmel's work for his first genre painting, *Rustic Dance after a Sleigh Ride* (1830). Like Krimmel, Mount includes a stereotyped African-American fiddler in this work. Mount's most sympathetic and powerful portrayals of African-Americans, *The Power of Music* (1847) and *Eel Spearing at Setauket* (1845), came much later in his career.

put down with his axe when he stopped to listen. However, as Elizabeth Johns notes, the man "is the most sympathetically treated figure in the painting… he has more interiority than any other figure in all of Mount's painting." Indeed, she goes on to call *The Power of Music* "the most empathetic of all the antebellum images of the black male."[63] While Mount did construct a narrative predicated on whites, who play the music, the black worker is the painting's protagonist and it is his arrested state that draws the viewer in. Mount was not an advocate for the abolition of slavery, and was well known during his lifetime for his views on that subject, but he demonstrated through his paintings that he had the capacity to see blacks as individuals. He grew up in a slaveholding family on Long Island and spent a great deal of time during his youth with his family's slaves, and perhaps as a result he took blacks seriously as characters within his compositions.

Itinerant Artist is the only artifact that King left behind that references African-Americans in any way; as a result, it provides our best evidence for understanding his attitudes towards and relationships with African Americans. Because Krimmel and Mount's careers overlapped with King's, and because the two artists both portrayed blacks with some frequency, comparison with their work, though speculative, can assist us in identifying King's own attitudes. *Itinerant Artist* shares more commonalities with Krimmel's narrative style than with Mount's, in particular the heavily populated scenes and the diorama-style interiors popularized by David Wilkie. However, King's depiction of the African-American woman in *Itinerant Artist* shares Mount's sensibility for the representation of an individual and not a stereotype. Krimmel was interested in the ways in which blacks lived and worked in Philadelphia, and to him they were a part of the fabric of the city. Not only did he depict them within their own communities, but they

[63] Johns, *American Genre Painting*,120.

also form part of the crowd in paintings such as V*iew of Centre Square on the Fourth of July* and *Election Day in Philadelphia* (1815) **(Figure 94)** as well as constituting the central figure in *Pepper Pot*. None of these figures, however, rival King's characterization of the young woman in *Itinerant Artist*. Krimmel's interest in the black Philadelphians he depicted did not extend beyond their visual presence in the city; he was uninterested in them as individuals, and as a result after *Pepper Pot* these figures never again rise above caricature. Mount's works in contrast give the impression that the artist approached every model as an individual; characters in his paintings are all fully formed individuals, regardless of their skin color. This correlates well with King's work, and suggests that King like Mount knew individual African Americans well enough to see them as individuals, and not as more abstract racial types.

King spent the majority of his lifetime in two communities that were closely intertwined with slavery. He grew up in Newport, Rhode Island, which only began a gradual emancipation of its slaves in 1784, the year before his birth. At the time of the 1790 United States Census, 948 slaves still resided in Rhode Island, the largest number of slaves recorded in the northern part of New England.[64] Though in real terms and in percentage Rhode Island was home to far fewer slaves than any of the Mid-Atlantic States other than Pennsylvania, both the city of Newport and the state more generally had long histories with slavery. Much of the inland property in eighteenth-century Rhode Island was divided into southern plantation-style farms, complete with the lavish

[64] At that time, slaves made up 1.4% of the Rhode Island population. This represented the largest number of slaves in northern New England; neither Maine nor Massachusetts had any slaves by this time, and Vermont (16) and New Hampshire (158) had very few. Further south, slavery remained more prevalent. There were 2,764 (1.2% of the population) in Connecticut, 21,324 (6.3%) in New York, 11, 423 (6.2%) in New Jersey, and 3,737 (0.9%) in Pennsylvania, where gradual emancipation began in 1780.

mansions and elaborate social rituals that slave labor made possible.[65] Newport also was one prong in the "triangular trade" between Africa, the colonies, and the West Indies. Newport merchants imported sugar and molasses from the West Indies and distilled it into rum, which they traded in Africa for slaves, who then in turn were sold in the West Indies for sugar.[66] In addition, Newport merchants supplied West Indies plantations with many of the necessities that they did not produce themselves. Merchants in the triangular trade frequently took a portion of their profits in slaves, who they either kept themselves or sold through one of Newport's two slave markets or elsewhere in Rhode Island. Even after emancipation in Rhode Island, merchants continued to engage legally in the foreign slave trade for decades. Though not all Rhode Islanders were in favor of slavery, it was the New England state where it made the deepest systemic inroads. Wealthy southern planters' mid-nineteenth-century selection of Newport as a summer destination suggests that the climate remained neutral if not positive towards slavery within a region that otherwise had embraced abolitionist principles.[67]

When King relocated to Washington he found himself in a city where the slave trade remained legal and where many members of the Washington elite owned slaves.[68] Indeed, despite its ostensibly national character, Washington, D.C. was primarily Southern in outlook. Permanent Washington residents most frequently came from the surrounding areas of Virginia and Maryland, both slave-holding states. Particularly in the

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[65] The geology of the land in southern Rhode Island was hospitable to the same type of labor-intensive cash crop farming practiced in the American South. Irving H. Bartlett, *From Slave to Citizen: The Story of the Negro in Rhode Island* (Providence, RI: The Urban League of Greater Providence, 1954) 9-11.

[66] Jay Coughtry, *The Notorious Triangle: Rhode Island and the African Slave Trade 1700-1807* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1981).

[67] King was only a summer visitor to Newport by the middle of the nineteenth century, when the first planter mansion, Kingscote, was built for George Noble Jones (1839). That home was purchased by Charles Bird King's cousin William Henry King in 1864.

[68] The compromise of 1850 made the slave trade illegal in Washington, D.C.

early years, Southern political families further dominated the social scene in Washington because far more Southern congressmen brought their families to the Capitol than did Northerners, who "kept bachelor hall."[69] When King painted *Itinerant Artist* in the 1820s, slaves made up 15.4% of the population. Free blacks constituted another 15.4%, so African-Americans in total made up over 30% of Washington, D.C. inhabitants. By the 1860 census, the total number of African-Americans had dropped to 20%, and slaves made up only 4.2% of the overall population.[70] While the number of slaves dropped through the decades, the issue of slavery in the District of Columbia became increasingly divisive within the white population.

Tensions over slavery increased over time, but already by the 1820s the question of citizen status for African-Americans on the frontier was hotly contested. It was the cause of the conflict between Northern and Southern politicians that resulted in the Missouri Compromise (1820) four years before King composed his painting.[71] Later, in May of 1836, the House of Representatives adopted a controversial gag rule whereby

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[69] John Davis has done extensive research into the neighborhood just west of King's home, the block of F between 13th and 14th Streets, in the 1850s. The block included Anna Thornton (Virginia), Senator Judah P Benjamin (Louisiana, subsequent Secretary of War for the Confederate States), Mary Schoolcraft (author of *The Black Gauntlet*, a pro-slavery response to *Uncle Tom's Cabin*), Senator Robert Toombs (Georgia, subsequent Secretary of State for the Confederate States), and Jefferson Davis. John Davis, "Eastman Johnson's Negro Life at the South and Urban Slavery in Washington, D.C.," *The Art Bulletin* LXXX, 1 (March 1998) 77-78.

[70] These numbers are culled from the 1830 and 1860 U.S. Census records. The District at that time included Washington City, Georgetown, Alexandria, and rural Washington county. In 1830, the district counted 27,563 whites, 6,152 free colored, and 6,119 slave inhabitants. In 1860, there were 60,764 white, 11,131 free colored, and 3,185 slave inhabitants. *Abstract of the Returns of the Fifth Census, showing the Number of Free People, the Number of Slaves, the Federal or Representative Number, and the Aggregate of Each County of Each State of The United States. Prepared from the corrected returns of the Secretary of State to Congress, by the Clerk of the House of Representatives.* (Washington: Duff Green, 1832) 45. *Population of The United States in 1860; Compiled from the Original Returns of the Eight Census, under the Direction of the Secretary of the Interior, Joseph C. G. Kennedy, Superintendent of Census.* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1864) 588.

[71] The bill admitted Maine as a free state and allowed for the people of Missouri to form a state constitution that permitted slavery; it simultaneously banned slavery from the Louisana Territory north of 36˚30'.

petitions to the House in any way related to the abolition of slavery were tabled without being read.[72] By April 1838, petitions for the abolition of slavery, the repeal of the gag order, and against the annexation of Texas as a slave state filled a six-hundred-square-foot room in the Capitol to its fourteen-foot ceiling.[73] Many of the petitions advocated the abolition of slavery specifically within the District of Columbia; the fact that the slave trade continued in the nation's capital was particularly galling to opponents of slavery. Congress administered the District and could abolish slavery there if it so chose. The issue of slavery within Washington directly impacted its residents, but the national slavery issue also divided the city, and because Washingtonians were inclined to political debate the tensions surrounding the debate were more intense than in any other American community. Washington residents, whether officially connected to the government or not, kept a close eye on congressional deliberations. Many attended sessions at the House of Representatives and the *National Intelligencer* regularly devoted a full page of the paper (25%) to the work of the House while Congress was in session, frequently providing a transcript of debate.[74] As a result, the issue of slavery was both a national political issue and a local concern, and a topic of conversation and of contentious debate on both levels.

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[72] Many lawmakers believed that the gag order was unconstitutional because it violated the First Amendment's protection of the people's right to petition. Beginning in 1836, John Quincy Adams made the abolition of slavery in the District his primary goal, and argued for the introduction of abolition petitions based on the premise that the right to petition was a basic American right. He argued on the floor of the House of Representatives on January 22, 1840: "The right of petition…is essential to the very existence of government; it is the right of the people over the Government; it is their right, and they may not be deprived of it." Stephen W. Stathis, *Landmark Debates in Congress: from the Declaration of Independence to the War in Iraq* (Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 2009) 116.

[73] Joseph Wheelan, *Mr. Adams's Last Crusade: John Quincy Adams's Extraordinary Post-Presidential Life in Congress* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2008) 160.

[74] The *National Intelligencer* on February 9, 1837 reported that John Quincy Adams had submitted a petition from slaves to the House, which caused the Southern delegation to cry for his censure (Adams introduced the petition on February 6, 1837).

While *Itinerant Artist* encourages speculation about King's attitudes towards African-Americans, little primary evidence documents his views. Only one anecdote connects King to African Americans at all. Portraitist George Peter Alexander Healy recalled late in life that King had guided him through the "picturesque black quarter of the capital" in 1842.[75] King is not known to have owned slaves, and at the time of his death certainly did not. In his will, he left small annuities to two household servants, Philip Allen and Rosanna Day, whose ethnicities are not specified; if they had been slaves, however, the estate would have listed them as property.[76]

King's decision to include an African-American figure hedged his bets in the context of a city that was divided on the subject of slavery both locally and on the frontier.[77] King displayed the portraits of men and women of all political affiliations in the Gallery and there is no reason to believe that party politics governed any of his compositions. Instead, *Itinerant Artist* focuses on small "r" republican values such as hard work and presents the arts as a means of refining those values. King makes no specific statement regarding slavery, and the ambiguity of the young black woman King places at the narrative's heart removes the onus from the artist to make a political or cultural statement and allows the visitor instead to interpret the work based on his own beliefs. The viewer first must determine the woman's employment status. She may have

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[75] Marie De Mare, *G. P. A. Healy, American Artist: An Intimate Chronicle of the Nineteenth Century* (New York: McKay, 1954) 108.

[76] Slavery was abolished in Washington, D.C. less than a month after King's death, on April 16, 1862. Philip Allen appears in the original will, dated July 1861, where King describes him as "an honest and worthy man." Allen and Rosanna Day appear in the same line item (14-15) of an addendum to King's will dated October 23, 1861.

[77] John Davis has convincingly argued that Eastman Johnson navigated similarly slippery racial waters with *Negro Life at the South* (1859), which focuses on the African-American world in Washington, D.C. at the end of the antebellum era. The painting is set just two blocks away from King's studio and Gallery and both provides insight into slave life in the city and to Americans' willingness (or not) to accept slavery as a fact of life in the district. Contemporary viewers from both sides of the slavery question hailed the painting as aligned with their beliefs. While a much smaller part of the overall narrative of *Itinerant Artist*, King similarly succeeds in remaining neutral through the young woman's inclusion.

traveled with the artist. She holds a piece of pink fabric that is the same material as that worn by the sitter, and from the artist's portrayal it appears he has draped her with it to refine her appearance. The way the fabric crosses her chest, not tied down to anything, reinforces that the shawl is an addition and not a part of her costume. The well-dressed artist could perhaps afford to travel with an aide, though this further separates him from the plausible depiction of an itinerant artist, who would have traveled alone. Alternatively, the young woman could be a further symbol of the frontier family's prosperity. But as a result of her skin color we must ask – slave or free? An older white woman who looks out of the painting from the right-hand side of the canvas also appears to work for the family. She is at work over a pot, likely preparing a meal based on the cabbage to her right. She could be a member of the family, but that seems unlikely considering her distance from the family group and the fact that she is the only woman in the scene actively pursuing a household task.

Though its interpretation is open-ended, King's Gallery visitors were more frequently Southern and pro-slavery in sympathy and it is likely that the majority of King's audience would have assumed the woman was a slave. King does not define the location of the scene. However, if his viewers identified it as contemporaneous to the 1820s – and it is likely that at least in the early years it was on display they recognized the yellow empire-style dresses the two young women wear as almost contemporary costume – they knew the painting did not depict an East Coast scene. This family had traveled out into new Western territory. An anti-slavery visitor to the Gallery could choose to envision the woman as free, but the reality is that by the nineteenth century very few African Americans could be found on the Northern frontier.[78] Indeed, the

[78] By 1820, the frontier in the North had moved out of New York and Pennsylvania (small sections of each state were still frontier territory in 1810) and into Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. The frontier in the South was

percentage of blacks on the Northern frontier reached its height with the 1810 U.S. Census at 0.7%.[79] In contrast, the percentage of blacks on the Southern frontier peaked at 30.1% in 1830, and almost all were enslaved.

The young African-American woman, in the end, is a crucial tool to achieving King's goal, the composition of a scene that appealed to all of the different political and regional constituencies that patronized his Gallery. The fact that a viewer could recognize her as both slave and free opens up the narrative in a way that places its message within reach of all Americans in a way that would not have been tenable, particularly as sectional tensions increased over time, had the scene been clearly Southern or Northern. Viewers' acceptance of the painting as a positive statement on the development of American republican principles makes it possible for King to argue convincingly for the importance of the arts in the development and maturation of American society as well as for him to encourage the mental completion of the morality tale juxtaposition between *Itinerant Artist* and *Rip Van Winkle Returning from a Morning's Lounge.*

INTERIOR OF A ROPEWALK – NOSTALGIA IN THE FACE OF INDUSTRIALIZATION

Over a decade after creating *Itinerant Artist* and *Rip Van Winkle Returning from a Morning's Lounge*, Charles Bird King returned for a third and final time to Sir David Wilkie and to Dutch genre painting more generally for the organizing framework of a

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primarily in Tennessee, Mississippi, Alabama, and Louisiana; Missouri straddled North and South geographically.

[79] James E. Davis has calculated percentages of African Americans on the frontier by using a matrix that determines a "frontier county" as a county where, from one census to the next, the population increased from under 2 people/square mile to 2-6 people/square mile, and which was adjacent to a large tract of land uninhabited by whites. In contrast to blacks' minimal presence on the Northern Frontier, the percentage peaked at 30.1% of the total population (1830) on the Southern Frontier. Almost the entire African-American population in the Southern Frontier areas was enslaved. Southern free population peaked in 1800 at 0.5% of the total population. James E. Davis, *Frontier America 1800-1840* (Glendale, CA: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1977) Table 18, p. 125.

composition. The setting of *Interior of a Ropewalk* (c. 1840) is unusual; American artists rarely depicted industrial scenes. However, there is very little that is industrial about the setting King portrays. At the very moment industrialization was irrevocably changing ropewalks and the labor required in the manufacture of rope, King chose instead to celebrate the trade's artisanal past. The resulting painting, which heroicizes manual production practices, was completely inaccurate to contemporary ropewalks. *Interior of a Ropewalk* thereby takes its place within a triumvirate of scenes inspired by genre painting that define King's approach to American history and progress. If *Rip van Winkle Returning from a Morning's Lounge* evokes a mythical but unsavory American past, *Interior of a Ropewalk* brings the artisan past into the present, defying the contemporary reality of industrialization, and *Itinerant Artist* looks to future national greatness by stressing the natural progression towards refinement represented by the pioneer family. Because these paintings were some of the largest that King displayed, and appeared in the Gallery alongside copies of European masterworks, they highlighted differences between the cultural and political life of the United States and Europe. They also acknowledged the importance of European stylistic precedents in the visual arts.

King likely produced *Interior of a Ropewalk* around 1840. It shares compositional traits as well as size with *Itinerant Artist* and *Rip van Winkle Returning from a Morning's Lounge*, but King is far less successful in his articulation of the human figure and in his construction of perspectival space in this painting. Beginning in the late 1830s, King suffered from a disease of the eyes that for significant periods of time prevented him from painting.[80] There is no record of the painting prior to its accession by the Redwood Library in 1861; however, the stylistic evidence suggests that King produced *Interior of a*

[80] Elizabeth Newman commented about King's troubles with his eyesight in 1843 and 1844. See Introduction, Fn. 42.

Ropewalk after his eyesight began to deteriorate. The foreground, where the majority of the action takes place, and the background are disjointed, but the diminutive figures seated on the barrel in the middle ground to the right are far more troubling to the eye. They are much too small relative to their distance from the foreground figures. Their scale is more aligned with the small figures of the spinners who move along the side of the wall in the distance.

Interior of a Ropewalk depicts a type of building that was well known to most nineteenth-century Americans, and known to all who lived on the Eastern seaboard. Ropewalks, where rope was manufactured, were immediately recognizable buildings because of their unusual shape: narrow one-story buildings a full quarter of a mile long. References to ropewalks in the context of advertisements reflect their visible mark on their communities – advertisers frequently used them as landmarks, frames of reference for the surrounding area. As a result of their relationship to the shipbuilding industry, they typically were found in the neighborhood of ports. Ropewalks carried the strong smell of tar and were frequently destroyed by fires; for all these reasons, they were not located in the most respectable part of town. A number of news stories from the 1820s and 1830s reported that they had been the location of suspicious activities and as well of murders.[81] Though rope walks were recognizable structures, particularly as the century progressed and customers could purchase rope through retail stores rather than directly from the manufacturers, few Americans actually would have entered a ropewalk, unless perhaps to see new technology at work, which is far from the case in this depiction. Therefore, only a rare visitor to King's Gallery would have been familiar with the interior

[81] This was the case in the eighteenth century as well. The precipitating event behind the Boston Massacre was an altercation between British soldier Patrick Walker, out looking for temporary work, and the men employed at John Gray's Boston rope walk. The workers insulted Walker and knocked him to the ground. The soldier ran, but returned quickly with eight or nine additional soldiers, at which point a brawl broke out. Hiller B. Zobel, *The Boston Massacre* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1970) 182.

of the building and with the equipment and processes required to produce rope. Close study of the painting shows that King himself was aware of how ropewalks functioned, and that he chose a specific element of the process and excluded other stages in rope-making in order to romanticize the craft.

Interior of a Ropewalk depicts the process of spinning hemp fibers into yarn, only one of the many distinct stages in the production of rope, but the stage that required the most skill. In a long, narrow wooden structure, one man turns a wheel while two others move backwards down the walk in the distance. The diminutive figures are spinners; their job is to play out consistent amounts of the hemp that the action of the wheel spins into yarn as they walk. The man who turns the wheel in the foreground is their assistant. Ironically, considering the visual focus on his movements, he is the least-skilled worker present. The spinning of yarn was the second stage in rope production. The first was to clean and straighten the hemp fibers. Following spinning, the yarn was tarred for weatherproofing. Multiple yarns were then laid together along the length of the ropewalk to be twisted into strands, which were then joined together to form the final rope. This last step, the laying of the rope, required intensive manpower prior to industrialization. This stage was the first to harness power; in the first half of the nineteenth century ropewalks frequently utilized horsepower, steam power, or water power to drive the process. Typically the cart that supported the rope as it made its way down the walk during the laying process ran along rails; the absence of rails or of any machinery related to laying the rope is a significant exclusion in the painting. Removing the machinery simplifies the composition, directing the viewer to focus on the foreground figures rather than on the rope walk itself, and emphasizes the artisan trade. The resulting impression of the look and function of the ropewalk is inaccurate both to contemporary trends

towards industrialization and to older ropewalks which would have exhibited more of the stages of production than King depicts.

King's depiction of the process of spinning is accurate down to the smallest details: the four poles attached to the left-hand wall, with their spokes positioned to catch the yarn as the spinners passed; the thickness around the waist of the closer spinner, which shows the bundle of hemp spinners carried around their waists in order to free their hands to play out the fibers; their backwards movement down the walk; and their relationship to one another as they walked. The only element of spinning that King does not depict accurately is the number of spinners, perhaps in order to construct a visually clean composition. Up to four spinners often would walk at the same time in order to capture the efficiency of spinning the wheel to produce as much yarn at one time as possible. Indeed, another spinning wheel sits off to the side in the right background, and typically multiple wheels would be found in the same ropewalk, again to promote efficiency. An ambitious rope maker would employ enough spinners to work multiple wheels in order to use the length required to produce long rope to best advantage. Spinners were the best paid of all ropewalk workers and prior to industrialization their wages were commensurate with those of other skilled tradesmen.[82] The job required the most skill because any inconsistency in the amount of hemp he released as he walked would jeopardize the integrity of the final product.[83]

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[82] Louis P. Hutchins estimates that the highest-paid rope artisan (the "wheel leader") could have made just over $400 a year. This, Hutchins argues, was competitive in a wage landscape where according to historian Bruce Laurie's calculations an urban family of two adults and three children required wages of $330 a year to escape poverty. "Work, Culture, and Resistance to Mechanization in the American Rope Making Industry, 1830-1850," unpublished essay, 19. Bruce Laurie, *Artisans into Workers: Labor in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Hill and Wang, American Century Series, 1989) 59.

[83] I am thankful to Louis Hutchins for sharing with me his unpublished essay "Work, Culture, and Resistance to Mechanization in the American Rope Making Industry, 1830-1850." It is full of information regarding the operations of early nineteenth-century ropewalks. However, personal conversations with Hutchins regarding the technical accuracies and inaccuracies within King's painting were even more helpful.

King also accurately portrayed other elements of the ropewalk that were unrelated to spinning. Flaxen fibers hanging out of the loft are hemp, ready to be cleaned and straightened. A hook in the foreground would have been used to lift either bales of hemp or finished ropes. A bobbin, which held the wound yarn (and it would appear, from the dark tone, that this is tarred yarn), lies at an angle, resting on its spoke and on the edge of its flange. A short piece of coiled rope, with the strands emerging from the end, rests on edge next to the bobbin. The set of weights, which has become the plaything of a child, would have been used to weigh the materials used in rope making, or the product at any stage in the process, for quality control. The long, narrow windows that run the length of the walk provide the painting with perspectival depth, but also were common features of ropewalks. Finally, the glimpse of a moored ship out through the window identifies the location of the ropewalk as close to a port, the only geographical identifier in the painting.

The many small but accurate details that appear in *Interior of a Ropewalk* demonstrate that King was familiar not only with the structure but also with the internal workings of the trade. The painting presents a fiction that is more convincing due to the accuracy of the depiction of spinning. By focusing on spinning, which required the efforts of skilled artisans, rather than on the elements of the process that required more strength than skill, King embraced a lifestyle and traditions with rich history from the Colonial into the Early Republic period, but a way of life that quickly was passing with the industrialization of many former crafts. The best known and the farthest-reaching change in this period was that of the mechanization of the textile industry. The first factory in the Lowell, Massachusetts complex opened for production in September 1823.

By 1837, the factory employed 8,560 people.[84] By comparison, the 1840 United States Census records a total of 4,464 workers in the cordage trade, just more than half of the number of people working at Lowell alone.[85] Though they worked in a smaller industry, mechanization hit rope makers hard as well, and during the same time period. By 1850, the census reported a total of 2,200 workers nationwide, a reduction of fifty percent within a single decade.[86] *Interior of a Ropewalk* preserves the artisan trade and refuses to allow mechanization to intrude.

In 1858, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow published "The Ropewalk," a poem in eleven stanzas organized thematically around the spinners' work.[87] This was one of two poems Longfellow produced that specifically recalled his childhood, the other being "My Lost Youth."[88] While "My Lost Youth" recalls life by the sea as well as the tree-lined streets and pleasant groves of "Deering's Wood," "The Rope Walk" looks back to the artisanal past of rope-making in the face of contemporary mechanization. Just like King's painting, the poem ignores everything but spinning. Preparation of the hemp, tarring the yarn, laying the strands, and final formation of the rope are nowhere to be

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84 Industrialization began far earlier in Great Britain than in the United States, and indeed the Lowell approach was an American attempt to mitigate working conditions in Great Britain that American visitors considered deplorable. John F. Kasson, *Civilizing the Machine: Technology and Republican Values in America 1776–1900* (New York: Grossman Publishers, 1976) 59-60, 73, 102.

85 *Compendium of the Enumeration of the Inhabitants and Statistics of the United States, as Obtained at the Department of State, from the Returns of the Sixth Census, etc.…* (Washington: Thomas Allen, 1841) 364.

86 *The Seventh Census of the United States: 1850.* (Washington: Robert Armstrong, Public Printer, 1853) lxxvi.

87 Longfellow published the poem in *The Courtship of Miles Standish and Other Poems* under the section titled "Birds of Passage." The poem appears directly after Longfellow's other, more general, reminiscence of his childhood, "My Lost Youth." Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, *The Courtship of Miles Standish, and Other Poems* (Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1858).

88 Edward Wagenknecht, *Henry Wadsworth Longfellow: His Poetry and Prose* (New York: Ungar, 1986) 133-134.

found in the poem. The first and second stanzas compare the spinners to spiders, slowly building webs of meaning through their work:

> In that building, long and low,
> With its windows all a-row,
> Like the port-holes of a hulk,
> Human spiders spin and spin,
> Backward down their threads so thin
> Dropping, each a hempen bulk.
> At the end, an open door;
> Squares of sunshine on the floor
> Light the long and dusky lane;
> And the whirring of a wheel,
> Dull and drowsy, make me feel
> All its spokes are in my brain.

In subsequent stanzas, Longfellow describes various uses for rope, from supporting "fair maidens in a swing," to "Drawing water from a well," to the "gallows-tree". Longfellow grew up in Portland, Maine in a community that, like King's Newport, included a ropewalk. His poem simplifies the rope-making process to exclude the less dramatic elements of the trade. However, unlike King, Longfellow wrote his poem after the moment of mechanization had passed. Much as one finds in many of Longfellow's poems, "The Ropewalk" references an idealized Golden Age to which the United States could not return. King in contrast depicted a ropewalk as manual production was in the process of fading away.

Longfellow describes watching the spinners at work, and the rich descriptive language about the building brings the reader there, inside the ropewalk itself. The details of King's painting prove that the painter, too, was very familiar with the workings of ropewalks. His windows cast the same "[s]quares of sunshine on the floor" that Longfellow describes. But despite the many details that project the aura of accuracy, King's scene is an implausible fiction. As we have seen, the painting only depicts one

element of ropemaking. The visitors to the ropewalk further highlight King's liberties. The two figures who disturb the eye's understanding of perspective are the worst offenders for being unlikely sightseers. They are all well dressed. The man sitting on the barrel wears a navy dress jacket with white breeches, the attire of a gentleman rather than that of a laborer. The woman and children in the foreground are similarly well attired, likely part of the same party. The boy is playful, but also disrespectful, toying with the equipment just feet from the laborer hard at work turning the wheel. Visits to sites of impressive mechanization or to scenes of lower-class social experimentation, such as the Lowell factories, were a popular pastime for both domestic and international travelers. The American travel writer Anne Royall was one of many who visited factories and compared their operations as they toured around the United States.[89] Though the idea of sightseeing in a factory would not have struck an American audience as strange, the irony within the painting is that King's setting would not have inspired this type of visit. There is no technology to speak of, outside of the wheel, which had been employed in spinning for well over a century. The man who points out the spinners to his companion highlights tradition rather than innovation.

CONCLUSION

As the worker in *Interior of a Ropewalk* turns the wheel, a young boy balances on a set of scales and looks out at the viewer. The boy at play is incongruous in the painting; he and the other well-dressed visitors do not belong in the rough and tumble neighborhood of the ropewalk. The boy's antics transform the scales, otherwise standard equipment for a ropewalk, into symbols. The turning of the wheel and the scales in

[89] For instance, Royall commented on the type of machinery employed at a Pawtucket, Rhode Island textile mill and found it "greatly inferior" to that used in Waltham, Massachusetts. Anne Royall, *Royall's Sketches of History, Life, and Manners in the United States* (New Haven: Printed for the Author, 1826) 367.

conjunction evoke a sense of the passage of time and of the balance of fate, both emblematic concepts drawn from European artwork. The scene has a timeless rhythm to it – the wheel, scales, spinners, yarn, light falling in regular blocks down the walk. This is reinforced by the absence of mechanization, which indeed makes the painting timeless, as it depicts neither current technology nor the artisan process with any accuracy.

The strong undercurrents of Dutch art that run through *Interior of a Ropewalk*, ostensibly a painting about American industry but really a rejection of industrial processes, connect this work to King's other outstanding genre paintings on American themes, *Itinerant Artist* and *Rip Van Winkle Returning from a Morning's Lounge.* These works stood out in King's Gallery for many reasons, not least for their size and American subject matter. They were King's only essays in the stylistic language of Sir David Wilkie and of the Dutch artists who inspired him. Considering his exposure to Wilkie in London and his friendship with John Lewis Krimmel, it is remarkable that King never produced copies after Wilkie, nor did he own prints after any of Wilkie's paintings. King's three masterworks in that tradition stood out within his oeuvre as well as within his Gallery, where visitors would not have seen anything comparable. Indeed, King's copies after European masters tended instead towards romantic sentimentality: *Butterfly in a Storm. Frightened Young Lady, The Young Dragoon, Gipsey Boy, Strawberry Girl*.

King's triptych took on complex social and cultural issues that Americans were debating informally as well as at the highest levels during the years the works were on display. Their stylistic similarities encouraged astute viewers to associate the paintings' subject matter, through which King tackled issues few other American artists took on. Far from illustrations of the past, King's constructions provide material evidence for the political, social, and cultural shifts Americans were experiencing over the course of the antebellum period.

Conclusion – Decoding the Trompe l'oeil "Deception:" Constructing an American Gallery of Paintings

Charles Willson Peale's 1824 description of Charles Bird King's Gallery of Paintings as containing not only "a great many portraits but also Landscapes, pieces of Still life and some imblematical [sic] subjects" has framed my exploration of King's Gallery and of its role in nineteenth-century Washington, D.C. In his comments Peale, ever the friend to scholars of the Early Republic, neatly encapsulated the multifaceted display just as it was first opening to the public. In this concluding chapter, I turn to the final category Peale mentioned, "imblematical [sic] subjects," and in particular to the trompe l'oeil paintings King hung in his Gallery, *Poor Artist's Closet*, *Landscape with Catalogue*, and *Joseph (and Mrs. Potiphar).*[1] The trompe l'oeils themselves, and the emblematic properties they shared with other of King's original compositions and with the European copies he produced were, on a meta-level, emblems of the European style he presented as critical to the development of a national American art. Trompe l'oeil and emblematic elements frequently intersected in King's works, and both interested him throughout his career. King exhibited an overtly emblematic painting (*Children and Bubble*, 1806-1812) in 1813 in Philadelphia and produced a trompe l'oeil painting (*Poor Artist's Closet*) which itself incorporated emblematic symbols soon thereafter. The emblematic imagery that pervaded so much of King's original compositions, whether on American themes or not, grounded those works in the European tradition that was so evidently on display in his Gallery in the many paintings he copied. The trompe l'oeil paintings, though fewer in number, were equally significant for the relative scarcity of the art form in the United States in the first half of the nineteenth century, as well as for the

[1] Charles Willson Peale, *The Autobiography of Charles Willson Peale*, ed. Lillian B. Miller, Sidney Hart, and Toby A. Appel, *The Selected Papers of Charles Willson Peale and His Family* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press for the National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, 1983) 461.

special relationship that they create between artist and viewer, which is much more overt and collaborative than in any other category of painting.

VISITING MR. K—, A PEEP BEHIND THE CURTAIN

Considering the exceptional status of King's Gallery of Paintings in Washington, it is unsurprising that his friend Margaret Bayard Smith sent her young protagonists to Mr. K—'s painting room in her 1828 novel *What is Gentility? A Moral Tale*. Smith based the novel in contemporary Washington, D. C. and several prominent Washingtonians besides King make cameo appearances.[2] The novel's plot reinforces Smith's didactic message that the arts (visual, musical, literary) were critical to a well-rounded education. The scene at King's Gallery touches off a discourse between the visitors and the artist regarding the relative merits of the ancient Greek artists Zeuxis and Parrhasius. The tale was well known to all present and also part of general educated discourse in the United States at the time.[3] In the story, Zeuxis and Parrhasius compete to create the most realistic image of nature in a painting.[4] The illusionism of the grapes Zeuxis paints induces birds to peck at the canvas. Not to be outdone, Parrhasius creates a composition with a painted curtain, which Zeuxis attempts to remove. Realizing the deception, Zeuxis declares his opponent the winner for having deceived a true connoisseur – an artist – whereas he himself had only deceived a bird. In Smith's retelling, Lydia Tilton and her dog Tippo both pay the artist a compliment by mistaking paintings for reality. However Lydia's reaction of amazement is the larger accolade, particularly because she was herself an amateur artist.

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[2] Mrs. Smith refers to the American President's wife, Dolly Madison, as Mrs. M–d–n and to Benjamin Latrobe as Mr. L–t–b. For the passage at Mr. K–'s painting room, see Margaret Bayard Smith, *What is Gentility? A Moral Tale* (Washington, D. C.: P. Thompson, 1828) 183-188.

[3] See p. 245 below for a reporter's reference to the story of Zeuxis and Parrhasius in connection with the 1823 exhibition of Thomas Sully's copy of *Capuchin Chapel* in Charleston, South Carolina.

[4] Pliny, *Natural History*, XXXV.65.

The young men and woman's familiarity with the legends of ancient painters allows them to discuss with Mr. K— the various benefits of a "deception," as trompe l'oeil paintings at that time were known. Upon their arrival, Tippo becomes agitated at a painting of a cat in the window of the gallery. After being deceived by the cat, Tippo sniffs at a still life of "a market basket filled with provisions." In the second instance, he is undeceived only when he realizes there is nothing to smell on the canvas. The artist's response is to tell Tippo that he paid the painting "as great a compliment as the birds paid to the grapes of Zeuxis." Even after seeing her dog tricked, Lydia herself is deceived by a painting whose trompe l'oeil curtain covers a portion of the composition. She "start[s] back" in amazement when she recognizes the deception.

The novel's primary theme is the importance of education. The narrative follows the life paths of the children of the McCarty family of Washington. Through intersecting plot lines Smith emphasizes that education provides the only mechanism for improving one's status in society. Of the three McCarty children, only the middle child Charles obtains a classical education, studying Ancient Greek and Latin at Princeton University, and only he rises in the esteem of Washington society. Through his friendship with Paul Tilton, and through his eventual marriage to Paul's sister Lydia, Charles expands his classical education to the realm of the fine arts. Paul, a carpenter turned architect through the intercession of Mr. L-t-b (Benjamin Latrobe), is ridiculed as a laborer by the young "fashionable set" into which Charles' sister Catherine attempts to insinuate herself. However Paul, like Charles, through education and an attendant improvement in manners eventually succeeds, returning to Washington in the novel's final pages as an elected Senator from a "Western state."[5]

[5] It is difficult to determine what meaning to ascribe to Paul Tilton's elevation in a Western location and not in the East. The narrative arc sends Paul out West after marrying a daughter of a Congressman. Once there, he becomes involved in politics and succeeds from his "own talents and virtues." It is quite likely

In Smith's narrative, happiness emerges as a by-product of the arts (musical, literary, and visual). The McCarty's eldest son Timothy turns from vice and finds his future wife when he learns to play the violin. Brother and sister Paul and Lydia Tilton are contented and happy as a result of Paul's career as a carpenter and then architect, and Lydia's enjoyment of sketching and painting. Late in the book, Charles is appointed Ambassador to "a port of the Mediterranean," likely someplace on the Italian peninsula.[6] He and Lydia become well-loved by all they meet on this sojourn because of their knowledge of and appreciation for the country's culture, made possible by Charles' classical education and Lydia's interest in the visual arts. Charles and Lydia's foray to King's Gallery of Paintings, seemingly a digression, actually presages their later social success abroad.

At the moment she realizes the deception, Lydia becomes an active viewer rather than a passive observer. Art historian Wendy Bellion has argued that trompe l'oeil requires collusion between the artist and his audience. For a "deception" to work, the viewer must allow him or herself to be deceived while simultaneously recognizing the artist's role in creating the deception.[7] This activates a relationship between the artist and viewer via the mechanism of the painting. She cannot passively receive the content of the work of art but must respond to it by choosing to continue the deception, or by refusing it entirely. King exploited trompe l'oeil – the only medium that compelled his audience's interaction – to emphasize the relevance of his own European training, as well as European tradition more generally, to an American audience.

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that Smith intends the reader to connect Paul's easy success with the more open-minded attitudes of Western Americans, who are less likely to stand on precedent or ascribe value to lineage. Smith, *What is Gentility?*, 241-242.

[6] Ibid., 234.

[7] Wendy Bellion, "Likeness and Deception in Early American Art" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Northwestern University, 2001) 16.

Considering trompe l'oeil was not a particularly popular art form in the United States at the time, it is interesting that Smith chooses it as her foil for the young protagonists' discussion about the arts. The connection is appropriate for Charles' background in the classics, but it also suggests that, through her friendship with King, Smith was aware that his involvement in the genre set him apart. Smith likely based Lydia's deception in front of a painting on a work King produced no later than 1823 but which is no longer extant – *Joseph (and Mrs. Potiphar).*[8] Charles Francis Adams described coming across this painting on his visit to King's Gallery in January 1824:

> Some voluptuous pieces also which it would not do to notice before ladies. One in particular which appeared to be Joseph and the wife of Potipher [*sic*] although we could not see for a veil which John and myself attempted to raise, when we discovered the deception.[9]

Later in the same year, Robert Mills also described the painting in a letter to his wife:

> There is a picture representing the trial of Joseph's virtue by Potiphar's wife, which has a thin gauze curtain painted before it, which is so natural that you are much inclined to go and pull it aside—[10]

It is likely that this painting hung continuously in King's Gallery, for he gave it to the Redwood Library in 1861. What is clear from both of these descriptions, as well as from Smith's scene at Mr. K—'s studio, is that the painted cloth engaged viewers and encouraged their interaction with the work. It is not surprising that Smith declined to note the subject of the painting – a subject, after all, that it would "not do to notice before ladies." King's covering of the ostensibly lascivious picture with a false curtain pretends to delicacy, but in reality generates a particularly barbed joke at the expense of the

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[8] The painting entered the Redwood Library collection as *"Joseph" (and Mrs. Potiphar).* Redwood Library and Athenaeum accession records, December 12, 1861.

[9] Adams, *Diary,* I: 48.

[10] Robert Mills to Eliza Smith Mills, September 25, 1824, South Carolina Historical Society; quoted in *The Papers of Robert Mills, 1781-1855,* edited by Pamela Scott (Wilmington, Del., 1990), microfilm, Reel 5, document I/1003.

viewer. In order to be undeceived, the viewer must take action, and the act of attempting to remove the curtain both singles him or her out for indelicacy as well as frustrates any payoff by refusing to yield to their gaze. King's *Landscape with Catalogue* may have played a similarly mischievous trick on visitors to his Gallery **(Figure 95)**. Typically, proprietors charged a fee for exhibition catalogues. By attempting to take a catalogue from the wall, visitors made themselves visible targets for a sales pitch for the real thing. Once having self-identified as being interested in the pamphlet, they might be embarrassed into the purchase.

Though trompe l'oeil painting was not widely practiced by American artists in the early part of the nineteenth century, Americans wrote frequently about the few examples accessible to public view. Wendy Bellion has written an excellent study of the trompe l'oeil's status in the Early Republic, locating the nexus of activity in and around Philadelphia. She attributes the concentration of trompe l'oeil paintings in Philadelphia at least in part to the important roles that Charles Willson and Raphaelle Peale played in the development of the style. Charles Willson Peale painted two versions of a trompe l'oeil featuring a staircase, the first the famous 1795 *Staircase Group* of his sons Raphaelle and Titian Ramsay Peale. The mimesis was such that many decades later Peale's son Rembrandt recalled for the first art periodical *The Crayon* that no less a figure than George Washington was taken in by the portrait, bowing politely to the boys as he passed through the gallery of Peale's Philadelphia Museum.[11] Bellion argues convincingly that Peale composed the *Staircase Group* for display in a specific location

[11] Wendy Bellion believes this story to be apocryphal. It is true that, considering Charles Willson Peale's prolific chronicling of his times through both his letters and his autobiography, it is suspicious that the story first appears only in the 1850s. Rembrandt Peale, "Reminiscences, by Rembrandt Peale: The Person and Mien of Washington," *Crayon* III, part 3 (April 1856) 100. Wendy Bellion, *Citizen Spectator: Art, Illusion, & Visual Perception in Early National America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011) 63-65.

within the Senate Chamber of the Pennsylvania State House, the site of the 1795 Columbianum Exhibition, where it would have appeared most integrated with the space. Peale returned to the staircase as a conceit with the 1823 *Staircase Self-Portrait* Rubens Peale commissioned for his Baltimore Museum, and was equally attentive to the details of the room in which it was placed. He painted a faux carpet to match the gallery floor covering on the "permanent steps" as well as on the steps on the canvas itself.[12]

Charles Willson Peale's son Raphaelle produced smaller compositions that cleverly encouraged the viewer to attempt to touch the deception, only to discover the painting's two-dimensionality. His *Catalogue Deception* (after 1813) takes up the same theme as King's later *Landscape with Catalogue*. A contemporary critic described Peale's work, now lost, as having been painted on tin. If this were the case, the effect would have flattened the painted surface to the point where it was practically indistinguishable from the wall, facilitating the deception by completely eliding the picture surface.[13] A decade later, Raphaelle painted *Venus Rising from the Sea – A Deception* (1822), a composition that featured a tea towel obscuring a detail from Irish artist James Barry's painting of the same title **(Figure 97)**.[14] In Raphaelle's painting,

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[12] "I have painted 2 steps on the canvas [*sic*] with carpeting on them & also on the permanent steps – and on the floor the same carpeting extended as in Room…" Charles Willson Peale to Rembrandt Peale, August 5, 1823, reproduced in *The Selected Papers of Charles Willson Peale and His Family, Volume 4, Charles Willson Peale: His Last Years, 1821-1827* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1996) 299.

[13] In a conversation that Charles Willson Peale recalled in a letter to his son Rembrandt dated July 23, 1820 (*The Belfield Years*, 840-841), Peale recounts a conversation he had with James Thackara. Thackara, who was Keeper of the Pennsylvania Academy at the time, told Peale that after hearing a visitor comment that *Capuchin Chapel* on view at Earle's Gallery in Philadelphia at that time was "a perfect deception" and then ask for a catalogue to view the PAFA exhibition, he sardonically suggested that the visitor use the catalogue that "hung by the door, painted by…Raphaelle on a piece of Tin."

[14] Peale would have known Barry's painting from a 1772 mezzotint engraving by Valentine Green. Peale faithfully reproduces the angle of Venus' upturned left arm, her hair spilling across her forearm, as well as her right foot, which treads across a clump of flowers just at the edge of the sea. For a reproduction of Barry's print, see Dorinda Evans, "Raphaelle Peale's Venus Rising from the Sea: Further Support for a Change in Interpretation," *American Art Journal* XIV, 3 (Summer 1982) Figure 2.

which measures 29 ¼ x 24 1/8 inches, the towel covering the image is the same scale as an actual tea towel. It is obvious that the figure underneath, in contrast to the illusionism of the tea towel, is painted. The deception, then, does not conceal an actual woman, but rather a copy of a painting of a nude woman, and thereby engages in the contemporary debate regarding the propriety of viewing painted or sculpted nude figures. Raphaelle intended *Venus Rising* to be displayed framed (unlike deceptions that blended with their exhibition space backgrounds); as a result, the tea towel appears to hang illusionistically in front of a painted copy of Barry's work.

Charles Willson and Raphaelle Peale and Charles Bird King, though the only ones to paint in oil, were not the only artists who produced deceptions in Philadelphia in the early nineteenth century. Three other artists produced deception watercolors or drawings during the same time period. Samuel Lewis and Abraham I. Nunes, both writing masters, exhibited deceptions in the 1811 Society of Artists Exhibition, and Benjamin Latrobe twice included trompe l'oeil insets within professional architectural drawings.[15] In comparison, no deceptions are known to have been produced in New York or Boston during the same time period, and unlike Philadelphia exhibition catalogues which list multiple "deception" entries, the term does not appear anywhere in the early exhibitions of the American Academy of Fine Arts in New York.[16]

Charles Bird King was more prolific than any other artist of the time period, members of the Peale family included, in the volume and variety of trompe l'oeil paintings he produced. *Poor Artist's Closet* (which was one of at least three and possibly

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[15] Both Wendy Bellion and William H. Gerdts have written at length about Samuel L. Lewis. They also mention Abraham Nunes, though Nunes left far fewer traces in the historical record. See "Chapter 5: Orthographical Imitations" in Bellion, "Likeness and Deception in Early American Art" and Gerdts, "A *Deception* Unmasked: An Artist Uncovered," *American Art Journal* XVIII: 2 (1986) 5-232.
Latrobe also drew seven trompe l'oeils in his sketchbooks, both a sign of his interest in the technique and perhaps of his use of it to refine his draughtsmanship skills. Bellion "Likeness and Deception," 171-172.
[16] Ibid.,133 (Fn. 2).

four iterations on a theme), *Landscape with Catalogue,* and *Joseph (and Mrs. Potiphar)* all took advantage of the trompe l'oeil paradigm to engage the viewer in the Gallery's didactic program. By the end of the 1820s when King painted *Landscape with Catalogue* and *Vanity of the Artist's Dream*, a commissioned version of the artist's closet theme never meant for display in the Gallery, artistic interest in trompe l'oeil had largely faded in the United States. It would not resurge until the last quarter of the nineteenth century with the works of artists such as William Harnett and John Haberle.

If American artists turned away from trompe l'oeil by the 1830s, American audiences nonetheless embraced displays of optical tricks over the entirety of the nineteenth century. Comments about deceptions and visual illusions appeared frequently in periodical literature. François-Marius Granet's (1775-1849) *Capuchin Chapel*, copies of which exhibited across the Eastern seaboard in the 1820s to great acclaim, may have been the most popular painted illusion **(Figure 9)**. King displayed Thomas Sully's copy of *Capuchin Chapel* twice, in 1823 and 1825. The painting's subject, a group of Franciscan monks at prayer, was not the draw. Rather, crowds flocked to experience the highly effective illusionism of the scene. One story told in relation to the painting's exhibition in Charleston emphasized the composition's visual trickery:

> A gentleman who had visited that enchanting performance, impressed with a belief that it was all a mere trick, determined, as soon as he was alone to satisfy himself of the fact; to effect his object, he crept very softly under the green baize, which projected horizontally about 3 or 4 feet from the painting; having arrived at the end and just placed his finger on the canvass, when a burst of laughter from some visiters [*sic*] who had entered recalled him to a sense of his ridiculous situation. It is almost equal to that told of the Curtain of Grapes, which I believe within the recollection of anyone.[17]

[17] "Communications. Academy of Arts," *Charleston Mercury and Morning Advertiser* (April 9, 1823).

This anecdote highlights the viewer's desire to satisfy his need to be undeceived, to discover the "trick" behind the image, only to realize too late that the trick was in the paint on the canvas, and not a three-dimensional illusion. At the same time, the correspondent to the *Charleston Mercury* highlighted his own classical education and the extent to which Pliny the Elder's account of the competition between Zeuxis and Parrhasius was part of the rhetorical lexicon in the early nineteenth century.

The popularity of *Capuchin Chapel* spoke to viewers' fascination with illusionism. Stephen Bann has noted that *Capuchin Chapel's* European popularity anticipated the success Daguerre found in the later 1820s with his diorama.[18] In the United States, the same type of visual play extended deep into the nineteenth century. The early interest in deceptions and illusionism were succeeded by John Banvard's dramatic moving panorama – he exhibited his first panorama, 1,200 feet of canvas of the Mississippi River, in 1846 – followed by the exhibition strategies for dramatic landscape scenes, starting with Frederic Edwin Church's popular *Heart of the Andes* (1859) **(Figure 98)**.[19] Viewers explored *Heart of the Andes* in part through the aid of opera glasses that allowed them to view small portions of the canvas at a time, thus simulating the experience of viewing a panoramic landscape in nature.[20] This type of display required viewers' active suspension of disbelief. They could enter into another world, but theirs was an intentional entry, choosing to take up the opera glasses to narrow their gaze. In

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[18] Stephen Bann, *Parallel Lines: Printmakers, Painters and Photographers in Nineteenth-Century France* (New Haven, CT; London: Yale University Press, 2001) 22.

[19] According to one reviewer, the 1859 exhibition of the *Heart of the Andes* in New York took in over one hundred dollars each day for three weeks. "Church's 'Heart of the Andes'," *Cosmopolitan Art Journal* III, 3 (June 1859) 133.

[20] For analysis of Church's exhibition of *Heart of the Andes,* see Kevin J. Avery, "'The Heart of the Andes' Exhibited: Frederic E. Church's Window on the Equatorial World," *American Art Journal* XVIII (1 Winter) 52-72, esp. 59.

contrast, King and the Peales' deceptions aimed to begin first by deceiving the viewer and then, through undeceiving, to reveal the artifice.

The most complex of King's trompe l'oeils was also the one he explored over multiple compositions. *Poor Artist's Closet* was among a group of semi-autobiographical vanitas paintings that included the works known today as *Poor Artist's Cupboard* (c. 1815) and *Vanity of the Artist's Dream* (1830). These all shared the trompe l'oeil style and took as their subject the poverty of an anonymous contemporary American artist **(Figures 99 & 100)**.[21] King produced his first iteration on the theme soon after he returned from London and a decade before he opened his Gallery of Paintings. *Poor Artist's Cupboard* may be this earliest version; the dates 1812 and 1814 can be seen on papers the artist has abandoned in the closet and perhaps more tellingly King refers to Philadelphia six times. For all of these reasons, it is likely that King produced the painting soon after his sojourn there. Assuming *Poor Artist's Cupboard* to be an early iteration, comparison between it and *Vanity of the Artist's Dream* suggests that King over the course of the series of paintings followed the declining fortunes of his fictional artist. The painting presents the viewer with a niche, in which the absent artist has carefully stacked a collection of books, while two well-worn volumes – *Advantages of Poverty. Third Part* and *Pleasures of Hope* – fall open at the front. A conch shell rests above the stacked books, boxed drafting tools sit at the center of the composition, a rolled-up

[21] There are two extant paintings on this subject: *Poor Artist's Cupboard* (c. 1815) in the Corcoran Museum of Art and *Vanity of the Artist's Dream* (1830) in the Fogg Art Museum. King exhibited vanitas paintings outside his own Gallery periodically over his career. He sold *Still Life. The property of a poor Artist* to the Apollo Association in 1839, who raffled the painting to Mr. Albert Christie of New York that year; he exhibited *The Poor Artist's Closet* at the Boston Athenaeum in 1828; he subsequently exhibited a vanitas painting again at the Boston Athenaeum in 1832, titled *Poor Artist's Study*, owned by J. Fullerton. Fullerton's name appears on the face of *Vanity of the Artist's Dream*, which may or may not indicate that *Vanity of the Artist's Dream* was different from the painting King displayed in the 1828 Boston Athenaeum exhibition. Finally, King bequeathed *Poor Artist's Closet; or Sale of Artist's Effects* to the Redwood Library in 1862. The Redwood Library subsequently de-accessioned that work, and it remains missing.

canvas cuts across the space diagonally, and a portfolio exposes the edges of the sketches it houses just beneath a large volume titled *Lives of the Artists*. Not only the vanitas theme but also the separate elements of the conch shell, a glass of water, and a large piece of bread and knife atop a Delft-style plate unify the composition within the pattern of Dutch tradition.

King explored the theme of the artist's status in American society from an ironic, semi-autobiographical perspective over the course of the series. Both *Poor Artist's Cupboard* and *Vanity of the Artist's Dream* display an artist's tools and book collection. Though the paintings may never have been exhibited together, King's gallows humor is all the more evident when we compare the two works, considering them as a part of a series and not completely independent of one another. From 1815 to 1830, books have aged and the artist's "cupboard" has become increasingly cluttered.[22] While some elements of the paintings – such as the books, some of which have fictional titles – are imagined, other objects must have been King's own. The drafting tools that King places at the center of both paintings are identical, and the porte-crayon and sketchbook in

[22] Many of the titles reappear from one painting to the next. The appearance of the books is not universally consistent; in some cases the binding color has changed, as has the spelling of the title or of the author. The consistency of the titles and the relative decay of the objects show that King was purposeful in creating an environment over time for his fictional artist. The alterations (beyond aging) in the objects suggests that he did not necessarily have the earlier paintings in front of him but was himself producing images from recollection. The large book that sits on the right-hand side of both paintings, *Lives of Painters*, has deteriorated to the point where the binding shows through (it also has a red label in the later painting, instead of black, but the same title). The *Pleasures of Hope* has lost its first title page, revealing that it was written by "Campbell" and is "dedicated to painters," based on the portion of the dedication page that is revealed by the torn title page. *Pleasures of Imagination* also appears in both paintings. In *Poor Artist's Cupboard* it is upright and has a handwritten title on its crumbling spine, while in the later painting it lies open behind *Pleasures of Hope.* Finally, "Cheyne on Vegetable Diet" has lost its own deteriorating binding in favor of a hand-bound cover with the title written on the spine.

Vanity of the Artist's Dream both appear in self-portraits of the artist **(Figures 68 & 101)**.[23]

Vanity of the Artist's Dream satirizes its purchaser, "J. Fullerton." Just above the palette, a letter from the Boston Athenaeum regretfully informs the artist that it has accidentally sold his work for half-price to "Mr Fullerton who refuses to relinquish it or pay your price." King listed a painting titled *The Poor Artist's Closet* "For Sale" in the 1828 Boston Athenaeum exhibition catalogue. Four years later, the 1832 Boston Athenaeum exhibit catalogue listed a painting by King titled *Poor Artist's Study* as owned by "J. Fullerton." Whether *Vanity of the Artist's Dream* is the painting from the 1828 exhibition, or whether Fullerton commissioned another painting like it afterwards, it is unlikely that it hung in King's Gallery more than briefly after its completion.[24] Nonetheless the references from one painting to the next indicate King's investment in the trope of the struggling artist and in self-expression through its means. Unfortunately little is known about J. Fullerton, aside from his connection to King's painting and from a reference in the gift annual *The Token* that he owned a copy that Thomas Sully produced of another of King's paintings, *Grandfather's Hobby*. [25] In this era, where visible patrons of American art were few and far between, Fullerton's active presence in the composition is remarkable.

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[23] King holds the porte-crayon in his right hand in his 1815 self-portrait, and holds a sketchbook very similar in style to the one that falls open in *Vanity of the Artist's Dream* in his late self-portrait of 1856-1858.

[24] The painting's title, as this analysis makes clear, is a modern one. I use it, however, because of the general confusion regarding the number of trompe l'oeil paintings on the subject of an artist's belongings King created. Nonetheless, it is almost assuredly the same painting that the Boston Athenaeum listed as *Poor Artist's Study* in their 1832 exhibition, if not the painting King displayed in 1828.

[25] See the Preface to *The Token A Christmas and New Year's Present* (Boston: Carter and Hendee, 1830) iv. *The Boston Athenaeum Art Exhibition Index 1827-1874* (Boston: Library of the Boston Athenaeum, 1980) 88.

Poor Artist's Cupboard and *Vanity of the Artist's Dream* both blend fiction and reality convincingly yet ironically. Charles Bird King was never an impoverished artist; he was a successful portraitist of independent means. He did travel as an itinerant artist in search of sitters in the years after he returned to the United States, but he was not alone – even the most successful portraitist of the early nineteenth century, Gilbert Stuart, traveled in search of new business. In a self-portrait of approximately the same date as *Poor Artist's Cupboard*, King portrays himself as a well-dressed young man, and there is no reason to believe that he wasn't. Though its early date confirms that King did not produce *Poor Artist's Closet* specifically for his Gallery, it played an important role in that space. Visitors would have recognized the dissonance between the artist's circumstances – they after all were standing in his finely appointed exhibition space – and those depicted by the painting. It was not just a deception – a painting that not only invites but also requires active viewing – it was ostensibly autobiographical as well. The painting promoted the easy laugh by referring to the poverty of the specific artist (King). However, the thoughtful viewer would have noted King's serious purpose as well, to comment semi-autobiographically about the elements of art that he considered important: training in draftsmanship, extensive reading and knowledge of tradition, and the importance of European precedents.

The many similarities between *Poor Artist's Cupboard* and *Vanity of the Artist's Dream* highlight two primary messages: the poverty of artistic patronage (and consequently, of artists as well) in the United States, and the importance of European study for artists and patrons alike. The former issue – poverty of artistic patronage – decodes easily and in an entertaining manner for the viewer, whom King provides an embarrassment of textual and pictorial riches to make his point. This becomes especially true when we include *Vanity of the Artist's Dream*, where King calls out his own patron

for his miserly habits, farcically misrepresenting both the artist (not penniless) and patron (not penurious). Both paintings present themselves to the viewer as catalogues of the artist's effects, introduced and reinforced by the "Sheriff's Sale" clippings at upper left. The clipping from *Poor Artist's Cupboard* reads in part:

> The Property of an Artist
> Consisting of one candle, one Bla-
> nket, Two pair of Ruffles, Peticoat,
> Silk Stockings, and Peck of Potatoes
> Four Pictures, of Roast Pigs, Turkies,
> Decanters of Wine, and Plumb Cake
> Painted from Recollection….

Comparison with an 1823 *National Intelligencer* "Sheriff's Sale" advertisement provides context for the satire. This advertisement is typical of Sheriff's sale notices, which characteristically focused on real property, such as land and structures. After stating that the defaulter, a John Perkins, has land holdings of 580 acres in different parts of Prince George's County, Maryland, the advertisement continues:

> The improvements are an excellent large frame dwelling house, tobacco houses, stabling, and a good well of water in the yard. The land will be sold with or without the crop, as may suit the purchaser.[26]

The comparatively few possessions of the artist – no land, no home, and no furnishings beyond a candle – are striking. The humor (bitter though it may be) of King's Sheriff's sale announcement is that the items listed are the artist's only "property." Meager though they are, the Sheriff has seized them. King drives the final nail into his fictive poverty by stating that he painted a still life of a plum cake "from recollection," presumably because he could not afford to purchase one and by extension could not afford to feed himself.

If *Poor Artist's Closet* served as a conceptual, paradigmatic guide to the collection, *Landscape with Catalogue* purported quite literally to be a guide to the

[26]"Sheriff's Sale," *National Intelligencer* (September 4, 1823).

collection. The painting represents a European-inspired ideal landscape, with crumbling ruins in the background and a blasted tree trunk in the foreground. These evocations of the Sublime provide a scenic backdrop to a disintegrating "Descriptive Catalogue of the Pictures in King's Exhibition" dated 1828. Compositionally and symbolically, the ruined building and ruined catalogue echo one another. The landscape shared similarities with many of the European copies in King's collection; the compositional structure of the painting, then, presents a guide to the collection that replaces the faulty catalogue deception. The catalogue cues the viewer that the work itself contains a clue to the make-up of the collection and to the stylistic vocabulary he or she needed to decode it. By placing a catalogue in front of what appears to be an old master landscape, King signals the importance of European tradition to the construction of the collection as clearly as would perusal of the catalogue itself. Further complicating the composition, the catalogue cleverly masks the suggestive encounter between a seated woman and a kneeling young man. We see the nude legs and gesturing hand of the woman, and the rolled-up pants leg of the man, who lean toward one another. King invites his audience to imagine the couple's interaction, hidden discreetly behind the catalogue, simultaneously suggesting that the other paintings in the collection will reward close scrutiny and active engagement.

King did not place the catalogue to his collection in front of a European-inspired landscape composition capriciously. It was a signpost to the visitor of the importance of European stylistic conventions to the understanding of the collection, both original compositions and copies after European masters. Though he did copy landscape prints for the Gallery, none of his original compositions resemble an imagined European landscape scene. All of the original landscapes King gave to the Redwood Library bore titles that linked them to specific American scenes: Wissahicon Creek in Pennsylvania,

Hadley Falls in Massachusetts, and the Potomac and Harper's Ferry in the Washington, D.C. surrounding area **(Figures 102-103)**. And unlike the Rosa-esque backdrop to *Landscape with Catalogue*, the Harper's Ferry landscape scenes (King's only American landscapes for which photographs have survived) draw on the style of Claude Lorraine in their atmospheric sunlight and tranquil settings. In contrast to *Landscape with Catalogue*, which prominently features both crumbling ruins and a blasted tree whose severed trunk hangs down into the stream that winds through the foreground, the structures, boats, and landscape in King's surviving American scenes are whole and undamaged.[27] These two paintings, both scenes of Harper's Ferry, are sublimely peaceful, sun-bathed scenes of ferry workers and leisure fishermen, and offer a symbolically loaded reference to the peace, prosperity and health of the young nation where all of nature is in alignment.[28] In this instance, the European copies offer a platform for understanding the original compositions by providing a study of contrasts that grounds King's reference to Claude Lorrain and to the visual language of the Beautiful as it contrasts with Salvator Rosa's embrace of the Sublime.

King foregrounded the same emphasis on European tradition and more broadly on rigorous training in *Poor Artist's Cupboard*. In both this painting and *Vanity of the Artist's Dream*, King placed draftsman's tools at the center of the composition. There are no brushes in *Poor Artist's Cupboard* and the palette is far to the back of the niche, barely visible at the left. Between the drafting tools, the books, and the prints, King

[27] Unfortunately, though there are photographs of the paintings, the paintings themselves have been lost. The 1891 Redwood Library *Annals* reproduces the list of paintings they selected from King's estate for their collection: "19. View on the Wissahickon, near Philadelphia. 20. View on the Potomac; Georgetown in sight…70. Bredon's Cottage; Harper's Ferry. 71. Hadley's Falls; New York. 72. Great Falls, on the Potomac." George Champlin Mason, *Annals of the Redwood Library and Athenaeum* (Newport, RI: Redwood Library, 1891) 234, 236.

[28] For reproductions of *Harper's Ferry, Government Work Lock on the Potomac* (c. 1815-1820) and *Harper's Ferry, Looking Upstream* (c. 1815-1820) see Andrew J. Cosentino, *The Paintings of Charles Bird King (1787-1862)* (Washington, D.C: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1977) Figures 99 and 100.

makes a strong statement for the importance of tradition and of rigorous training – mirroring his own path to success and a regimen that few artists who came of age during and after the War of 1812 could rival. He furthermore emphasized in this painting the importance of training in emblems for both artist and patron. The conch shell, the knife, bread, Delft-style plate, and glass of water are all traditional symbols from seventeenth-century Dutch art.

EMBLEMATIC TRADITION IN AMERICAN ART

King's *Poor Artist's Closet* and related paintings were of course trompe l'oeils, but they also were emblematic paintings, and while trompe l'oeils were scarce in the United States, emblematic imagery was common. The emblematic tradition began during the Italian Renaissance, but flourished in all of Western Europe in the centuries that followed. Over this period, the abstract objects that writers and artists together had imbued with symbolic meaning by combining images with extensive textual gloss became so well known that they frequently appeared in visual contexts without any textual aid. The emblematic tradition had deep roots in American visual culture. By the revolutionary period, as Roger B. Stein has observed, emblematic imagery could be found in cartoons and broadsides, on currency and newspaper mastheads, as well as in portraits, on the pediments of public buildings, and in collections of poetry and prose from Ben Franklin's broadsides to Barlow's *Columbiad*.[29]

The pervasiveness of emblematic imagery, Stein argues convincingly, shows that Colonial Americans were conversant with European-derived emblematic visual tradition, while at the same moment American artists and artisans searched for specifically national

[29] Roger B. Stein, "Charles Willson Peale's Expressive Design: *The Artist in His Museum*," in *New Perspectives on Charles Willson Peale: A 250th Anniversary Celebration*, ed. Lillian B. Miller and David C. Ward (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press for the Smithsonian Institution, 1991) 177.

emblems to add to the visual mix. Stein places Charles Willson Peale's late self-portrait *The Artist in his Museum* (1822) **(Figure 2)** at the terminus of an overtly emblematic tradition in American art. Peale himself referred in his *Autobiography* to his action of lifting the curtain to display the Long Room exhibition space as "emblematical that he had given to his country a sight of natural history in his labours [*sic*] to form a Museum."[30]

Though Peale's self-portrait is a complex composition full of emblematic meaning, and as such a symbol of the waning Enlightenment, it is too much to say that the painting reflects the end of an era. Many American artists in the middle years of the nineteenth century did move away from overtly emblematic imagery, with its European visual referents, in favor of symbolism more directly tied to the American experience. However King's Gallery, and the trompe l'oeil paintings that encapsulated its message, was part of a countervailing trend. The collection's popularity is one salient illustration of the continuing resonance of European stylistic and emblematic imagery within American popular culture through mid-century.

King's early interest in emblematic imagery continued throughout his career, sometimes through individual components in a composition and at others as a coherent pictorial message. As I discuss in Chapter 3, King returned to the motif of a child blowing bubbles several times over the course of his career. He had first explored it while living in London, where he produced at least one painting on the subject, and then displayed a second painting titled *Children and Bubble* (1806-1812) in 1813 in Philadelphia. The PAFA catalogue included emblematic text gloss in its entry for the painting: "Philosophers like children sometimes choose/ To chase the bubble and the

[30] Lillian B. Miller, ed., *The Selected Papers of Charles Willson Peale and his Family, Volume 5: The Autobiography of Charles Willson Peale* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2000) 441.

substance lose." King returned to the subject again in *Rip van Winkle Returning from a Morning's Lounge* **(Figure 77)**, where the motif of the bubble highlights young Rip's pointless lethargy. Emblematic elements appear to a greater or lesser extent in many of King's original compositions. The young boy in *Grandfather's Hobby* **(Figure 23)**, so serious at play in his grandfather's chair, is an evocation of the fleeting nature of youth. The hobbyhorse hanging from the arm of the chair is a light visual-verbal pun, while the newspaper the child holds upside down refers slyly to the topsy-turvy nature of the scene. When the editors of the Christmas gift annual *The Token* included an engraving after the painting in their 1830 edition, they reinforced the emblematic message through a poem that appeared alongside the image. The poem describes the young boy's feeling of elation to have taken his grandfather's chair, "deem[ing] himself in boyish glory,/ Like the old man that told the story!"[31] *In Interior of a Ropewalk* **(Figure 78)**, a young boy balances on a set of scales, which are both practical tools of the trade as well as symbols of justice. Through the scales, King adds a gloss of commentary on the American experience, where Justice is blind and therefore fair. Finally, a lost temperance series that apparently followed a young man's descent into drink very likely included emblematic elements to reinforce the morality tale told across the canvases. Its European precedent, William Hogarth's series of eight images *A Rake's Progress* (engravings published 1735), was filled with symbolic meaning **(Figure 87)**. Hogarth's series follows the fate of Tom Rakewell as he inherits a fortune at his father's death, squanders it, marries for money only to lose a second fortune, and finally dies insane in Bedlam hospital. In the first engraving alone, we find the familiar emblems of a snuffed-out candle, a cat (emblem to Cesare Ripa of freedom and liberty) investigating an open trunk,

[31] *The Token* engraved Thomas Sully's copy after King's original work. *The Token*, 233-234.

and coins tumbling from the ceiling as symbol not only of Rakewell's newfound wealth but also of its ephemeral quality. The titles of the individual paintings in King's series - *First Step to Ruin; Second Step to Ruin, the Loafer; Third Step to Ruin, the Fast Man; Last Step, Meditating on Departed Spirits* – suggest that much like in Hogarth's series, the same protagonist appears in all of the paintings and follows a logical descent into dissipation by foreswearing work, turning to crime, and finally losing himself in alcohol, all of which compositions undoubtedly included emblematic imagery.[32]

The emblematic tradition did not die with the Early Republic. Political and intellectual foci shifted, but the symbolic power of images did not wane. The popular success of King's Gallery of Paintings was no anomaly. Despite the narrative of nationalist and stylistic exceptionalism that has prevailed for the past two centuries in art historical scholarship, King's composition of his Gallery collection spoke to the viewing and collecting interests of his patrons. King's own work, and the work he displayed by other artists, demonstrates that not only patrons, but also many artists themselves continued to value and emulate European artists' masterworks. Looking back over exhibition records for the Apollo Association and Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, European originals and copies and American subjects within the Dutch pictorial mode remained important into the 1840s. And some of the best-known paintings from the period, such as William Sidney Mount's *Bargaining for a Horse* (1835) demonstrate that symbolic imagery, if not emblematic imagery in the Dutch tradition, remained popular and current **(Figure 104)**. If King's *Interior of a Ropewalk* overtly employs European emblematic language in the inclusion of a child playing on a set of scales,

[32] The titles are known from an 1859 Catalogue of paintings owned by the Redwood Library. Collection of the Redwood Library Archives.

Mount hints that the two individuals in *Bargaining for a Horse* are about to make a deal through the gesture of the older whittling farmer, who is "coming to a point."[33]

King's Gallery helped to formulate as well as reflected trends in American visual culture. By drawing the viewer into communication with the objects and their maker, *Poor Artist's Closet, Landscape with Catalogue,* and *Joseph (and Mrs. Potiphar)* helped to interpret the nature of the relationship between American and a European artistic tradition. Expanding this visual conversation to the collection at large not only educated King's visitors to European tradition but also helped them to experience American culture through the means of its symbolic visual vocabulary. King did not initiate a collecting interest in Old Master paintings, but he played into it with his numerous copies after European artists' works, producing, in the absence of original masterworks, the content that his visitors wanted to see in the Gallery. He was at the forefront of the emerging genre tradition in the 1820s and his Dutch-inspired works reinforced the importance of that stylistic language in the creation of American genre scenes. The Gallery's frequent appearance in guidebooks and on maps from the 1840s onward, even though King privileged the visual language of European Old Masters and the Dutch emblematic tradition, testified to their continued popularity with the American public. The many copied and original portraits and fancy pieces further complicated the matter of identity. The copies, which ranged from portraits after Gilbert Stuart, Van Dyck, Rembrandt, and both portraits and fancy pieces after Sir Joshua Reynolds, joined original portraits of American Indians and men and women of commerce, society, and politics in Washington, D.C. The Gallery collection was eclectic and acutely personal while simultaneously creating the overarching effect of establishing a multidimensional portrait

[33] Elizabeth Johns, *American Genre Painting: The Politics of Everyday Life* (New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 1991) 31.

of American identity that celebrated a new national language emanating from the country's European visual and cultural heritage.

Appendix One – Charles Bird King Gifts to Redwood Library

Charles Bird King made gifts to the Redwood Library at various times in his life. The earliest catalogue of the Redwood collection is dated July 1st, 1859. This catalogue lists a total of 85 gifts from King that entered the collection prior to that date, along with one painting with no attribution but which fits the style of other King gifts (Cat. no. 11). One of the paintings listed as a gift from King (Cat. no. 75, *Gov. Joseph Wanton*), however, likely was not a gift from the artist so the accurate total prior to the publication of the catalogue is 85. In late 1861, King's nephew and eventual executor George Gordon King sent five boxes of paintings to the Redwood Library at the artist's request. The accession records note a gift of 43 paintings, although a transcription error appears to be responsible for splitting one painting into two pieces. The gift really amounted to 42 paintings. Finally, King's will provided the Redwood the opportunity to select an additional 75 paintings for their collection after his death. These are listed as the Redwood Library bequest. The total number of gifts from these different source documents is 202. The 1885 Catalogue of the Redwood Library collection, the most complete catalogue to that point, states that King gave a total of 212 paintings to the Redwood. It is unclear when the additional paintings entered the collection but paintings with no correspondence to earlier documents appear in the last section, under the title "1885 Catalogue Paintings with no Earlier Correspondence".

In each section, the catalogue number from the 1885 catalogue (*Catalogue of Pictures, Statuary, &c., Belonging to the Redwood Library. September 1, 1885.*) appears in brackets. Where there is a discrepancy in title or additional information that clarifies an entry, the 1885 entry appears in brackets before the catalogue number. Where there is

strong reason to believe that the Redwood records are incorrect, the correction appears in bold at the end of the entry. Because King gave so many portraits to the Redwood, the portraits appear first in each section. Original portraits are followed by portrait copies, and then by works in other genres. Where known, the paintings are divided into original and copy (after other artists, casts, or engravings) sections; any questionable attributions are placed in a section titled "unknown."

PRE-1859 GIFTS (LISTED IN THE JULY 1, 1859 REDWOOD LIBRARY CATALOGUE)

Titles, artist attributions, and catalogue numbers are given as they appear in the 1859 Catalogue. The 1859 catalogue lists all paintings by King, including his copies after other artists, as by King. "CBK" after the work therefore reflects King's hand but does not necessarily suggest that the painting was an original composition. Those paintings that the Redwood wanted to identify as copies acknowledge the original artist within the title. Paintings by other artists are attributed as such.

Original Portraits

John Q. Adams, President of the United States. CBK. Cat. no. 90. [1885 Catalogue lists the painting (incorrectly) as "Copied from Stuart." Cat. no. 110.]

Amiskquew, a Menominie Warrior, 1831. CBK. Cat. no. 43. [Cat. no. 203.]

Assinaboin, an Indian, from the most remote tribe that had ever visited Washington previous to 1838. CBK. Cat. no. 63. [Cat. no. 170.]

Major Timpoochee Barnard, a Uchee Warrior and Creek Chief, 1825. CBK. Cat. no. 8. [Cat. no. 196.]

Gen Jacob Brown, Commander-in-Chief U.S. Army. CBK. Cat. no. 81. [Cat. no. 124.]

John C. Calhoun, Secretary of War, 1818. CBK Cat. no. 93. [Cat. no. 117.]

Miguel Carvallo, Minister from Chili. CBK. Cat. no. 32. [1885 Catalogue lists as "Manuel Carvallo, a Chilian statesman. Born at Santiago, 1808; resided in Washington as Chargé d'Affaires, 1836 and 1846." Cat. no. 84.]

Chenannoquot, a Menomine Chief, 1835. CBK. Cat. no. 42. [Cat. no. 202.]

Child of Mr. Way, of Alabama . CBK. Cat. no. 31. [1885 Catalogue lists as: "Child of Clement C. Clay, Jr., Huntsville, Alabama." Cat. no. 14.]

Chonmonicase or Shaumono Kusse, an Otto Half Chief. CBK. Cat. no. 36. [1885 Catalogue lists as" Chonmonicase, an Otto Half Chief," cat, no.195.]

Gov. William Coddington. CBK. Cat. no. 95. [Cat. no. 134.]

Mr. Conner, a Revolutionary Soldier, at 94 Years of Age. CBK. Cat. no. 57. [1885 Catalogue lists as "Mr. Connor, a Revolutionary soldier, at 94 years of age." Cat. no. 135.]

William H. Crawford, Secretary of Treasury. CBK. Cat. no. 92. [Cat. no. 115.]

Commodore Stephen Decatur. CBK. Cat. no. 84. [Cat. no. 126.]

Joseph Gales, Jr., National Intelligencer. CBK. Cat. no. 52. [1885 Catalogue lists as "Joseph Gales. Born in England, 1786; editor of the *National Intelligencer;* died in Washington, 1860." Cat. no. 42.]

Hayne Hudjihine, the Eagle-of-Delight, favorite wife of Shaumone Kussee. CBK. Cat. no. 37. [1885 Catalogue lists as "Hayne Hudjihine, the Eagle-of-Delight, wife of Shaumonekussee. At Washington, 1821," cat. no. 194.]

Patrick Henry, of Virginia. CBK. Cat. no. 88. [Cat. no. 112.]

Indian Chief, in Dress of Ceremony. CBK. Cat. no. 22. [Cat. no. 20.]

Senator Johnson, of Louisiana, killed by Explosion of the Humboldt. CBK. Cat. no. 12. [1885 Catalogue lists as "Josiah S. Johnston, U.S. Senator from Louisiana, 1824-

1833. Killed May 9, 1833, by the explosion of the steamboat Lioness, on Red River." Cat. no. 69.]

Keokuk, a Sauk Chief, with the Standard of his Nation. CBK. Cat. no. 21. [1885 Catalogue lists as "Keokuk, or the Watchful Fox, a Sauk or Sac chief, with the standard of his nation. In Washington and Boston, 1837." Cat. no. 25.]

Edward Livingston, Secretary of State. CBK. Cat. no. 18. [Cat. no. 122.]

George McDuffee, South Carolina. CBK. Cat. no. 53. [1885 Catalogue lists as "George McDuffie. Born, 1788; U.S. Senator for S. C. 1842; died in South Carolina, 1851." Cat. no. 28.]

Bear-in-the-Fork-of-the-Tree, Indian Chief. CBK. Cat. no. 45. [1885 Catalogue lists as "Nesouaquoit, or Bear in the Forks of a Tree; a Fox chief, son of Chemakassee," cat. no 44.]

Joel Poinsett, Secretary of War. CBK. Cat. no. 60. [1885 Catalogue lists as "Joel R. Poinsett. Born in Charleston, S.C., 1779; Secretary of War under President Van Buren; died 1851." Cat. no. 26.]

Peahmuska, a Fox or Musquakee Chief, 1831. Cat. no. 41. [1885 Catalogue lists Peah-mus-ka, a chief of the Fox or Musquakee tribe," cat. no. 169.]

Gov. Pierce, father of Ex-President Pierce. CBK. Cat. no. 85. [Cat. no. 113.]

Pushmataha, a Choktaw Warrior, born 1764, died in Washington Dec. 24, 1824, aged 60. Cat. no. 44. [Cat. no. 201.]

Commodore John Rodgers, 1824. CBK. Cat. no. 82. [Cat. no. 125.]

Gov. Wm. H. Seward of New York. CBK. Cat. no. 3. [1885 Catalogue lists as "William H. Seward. Born in New York, 1801; Governor of New York, 1839; U.S. Senator, 1849; Secretary of State, 1861." Cat. no. 8.]

Miss Simple, now sister Agnes Convent. CBK. Cat. no. 51. [1885 Catalogue lists as "Miss Simple, now sister Agnes, in a Convent," cat. no. 22.]

Mrs. Harrison Smith, author of Winter in Washington. CBK. Cat. no. 4. [Cat. no. 213.]

Samuel Southard, Vice President. CBK. Cat. no. 65. [Cat. no. 121.]

Mrs. Stockton, of Virginia. CBK. Cat. no. 15. [Cat. no. 72.]

Daniel Webster, 1817. CBK. Cat. no. 91. [Cat. no 118.]

William Wirt, Attorney General United States, 1820. CBK. Cat. no. 94. [Cat. no. 116.]

Portrait Copies

John Adams, President of the United States. CBK. Cat. no. 89. [1885 Catalogue lists as "John Adams. Copied from Stuart. Cat. no. 109.]

Christopher Columbus, from an old Spanish Painting. CBK. Cat. no. 79. [Cat. no. 131.]

Hon. G. Seymour Conway, from Sir J. Reynolds. CBK. Cat. no. 16. [Cat. no. 197.]

B. Franklin, said, by President Monroe to be the best likeness. CBK. Cat. no. 87. [Cat. no. 111.] **After Duplessis, though the records do not document this.**

A Head from G. CBK. Cat. no. 58. [Possibly 1885 Catalogue "Head of Hernando Cortez. From Giorgione?" Cat. no. 58. Could also be "Head. From Giorgione. Cat. no. 65.]

Head, from G. CBK. Cat. no. 64. [Possibly 1885 Catalogue "Head. From Giorgione. Cat. no. 65.]

Gen. Henry Lee, of VA, from Stuart's, 1830. CBK. Cat. no. 80. [Cat. no. 123.]

Thomas Jefferson, from G. Stuart. CBK. Cat. no. 26. [Appears as: "Thomas Jefferson. Profile. After Stuart." In 1885 Catalogue, cat. no. 40.]

Wife of President Madison, from Stuart. CBK. Cat. no. 15. [Cat. no. 74.]

Abraham Redwood, Founder of the Library. CBK. Cat. no. 74. [1885 Catalogue lists as "Abraham Redwood, founder of the Library. Born in Newport, 1709; died March 8, 1788." Cat. no. 38.] **Not listed as a copy, but Redwood died when King was three years old.**

Portrait of Rembrandt, from Rembrandt. CBK. Cat. no. 50. [1885 Catalogue lists as "Rembrandt. Born near Leyden, 1606; died in Amsterdam, 1669. From Rembrandt. Cat. no. 61.]

Mrs. Delia Stewart, wife of Flag-Officer Stewart. CBK. Cat. no. 5. [1885 Catalogue attributes as copy after G. Stuart. Cat. no. 135.]

Dr. William Thornton, Superintendent of Patent Office. CBK. Cat. no. 17. [1885 Catalogue attributes as copy after G. Stuart, cat. no. 120.]

Portraits by Other Artists

Healy, the Artist. G.P.A. Healy. Cat. no. 54. [1885 Catalogue lists as "G.P.A. Healy, the artist; painted by himself. Born in Boston, 1808. Cat. no. 24.]

Gen. Andrew Jackson. Herviin. Cat. no. 72. [1885 Catalogue lists as "Andrew Jackson" by Auguste Herview. Cat. no. 76.]

Gov. Joseph Wanton, Graduated at Harvard College 1751. Gov. of the Colony of Rhode Island from 1769 to 1776, - died 1782. No artist listed, but it is listed as a gift from CBK. Cat. no 75. [1885 Catalogue states that the portrait was painted in England. Cat. no. 128.] **Gift line likely a typo.**

Other Genres – Originals

Butterfly in a Storm. CBK. Cat. no. 2. [1885 Catalogue lists as "Butterfly in a storm. Frightened young lady. Original." Cat. no. 89.]

Female Head. CBK. Cat. no. 20. [Perhaps "Study from life. (Head)" Cat. no. 43.]

Female Head, from Life. CBK. Cat. no. 13. [Cat. no. 41]

French Costume in 1400. CBK. Cat. no. 19. [Cat. no. 81.]

Old King Cole. CBK. Cat. no. 69. [1885 Catalogue lists as "Old King Cole. Original. Cat. no. 171.]

Study from Life. CBK. Cat. no. 40. [Cat. no. 39]

First Step to Ruin. CBK. Cat. no. 46. [1885 Catalogue lists as "Temperance lecture, No. 1. First Step to Ruin." Cat. no. 209.]

Second Step to Ruin, the Loafer. CBK. Cat. no. 47. [1885 Catalogue lists as "Temperance lecture, No. 2. The Loafer." Cat. no. 210.]

Third Step to Ruin, the Fast Man. CBK. Cat. no. 48. [1885 Catalogue lists as "Temperance lecture, No. 3. The Fast Man." Cat. no. 211.]

Last Step, Meditating on Departed Spirits. CBK. Cat. no. 49. [1885 Catalogue lists as "Temperance lecture, No. 4. Meditating on Departed Spirits." Cat. no. 212.]

Other Genres – Copies

The Chemist. CBK. Cat. no. 28. [1885 Catalogue lists as "The chemist in meditation. From Gabriel Metzu." Cat. no. 49.]

Child and Dog, from a Cast. CBK. Cat. no. 30. [Cat. no. 145.]

Christ, copy from an Old Master. CBK. Cat. no. 24. [Cat. no. 172.]

Elymas, the Sorcerer, from Raphael. CBK. Cat. no. 25. [1885 Catalogue lists as "Elymas, the sorcerer, struck with blindness. From the cartoon of Raphael." Cat. no. 153.]

The Fortune Teller, from Sir Joshua Reynolds. CBK. Cat. no. 29. [Cat. no. 27]

Gipsey Boy, from Sir J. Reynolds. CBK. Cat. no. 39. [Cat. no. 99.]

Girl at the Brook, from a Cast. CBK. Cat. no. 67. [1885 Catalogue lists as "Girl at a brook. From plaster figure." Cat. no. 152.]

A Girl and Kitten, from an Engraving. CBK. Cat. no. 59. [1885 Catalogue lists as “Girl playing with cat and kitten.” Cat. no. 1]

Holy Water, from a Cast. CBK. Cat. no. 38. [1885 Catalogue lists as “Holy water. Two angels holding a vase of water. From a plaster cast. Cat. no. 91.]

Homer, from a Bust. CBK. Cat. no. 66. [Cat. no. 68.]

Italian Landscape, from Salvator Rosa. No artist given, but donated by CBK. Cat. no. 71. [Cat. no. 21]

Italian Vine Dresser and Copy. CBK. Cat. no. 39. [1885 Catalogue lists as “Vine dresser of Capri, near Naples. From Titian.” Cat. no. 88.]

Jeremiah, from Michael Angelo. CBK. Cat. no. 55. [Cat. no. 48.]

Paris, Son of Priam, of Troy, from a Bust. CBK. Cat. no. 61. [Cat. no. 57.]

Smoker and Card Player, from Ostade. CBK. Cat. no. 27. [Cat. no. 47]

Other Genres – Unknown

Child at Prayer. CBK. Cat. no. 35. [Cat. no. 90.]

Flemish Landscape. No artist, nor donor, listed. Cat. no. 11. [Cat. no. 51.]

Pirate. CBK. Cat. no. 23. [Cat. no. 208.]

Mexican Girl. CBK. Cat. no. 56. [Cat. no. 79.]

Father’s Joy and Mother’s Glory. CBK. Cat. no. 62. CBK. [Cat. no. 23]

Other Genres – Other Artists

Death of St. Antoine, 1567. Abram B---. Cat. no. 73. [1885 Catalogue lists as “Death of St. Anthony, A.D. 356. Artist, Abraham Bloemart, about 1600. Cat. no. 82.]

Fruit Piece. Grambita Russipoli Del Sig di Sala. Cat. no. 10. [Cat. no. 19.]

Lion Hunt, Flemish, 1603. Simon de Vos. Cat. no. 1. [1885 Catalogue lists as “Lion hunt. Flemish, 1603. Artist, Simon de Vos. Cat. no. 11]

Ruins in Adrian's Villa, near Tivoli. J. G. Chapman. Cat. no. 68. [Cat. no. 198.]

View of Washington. J. G. Chapman. Cat. no. 34. [Cat. no. 46]

1861 GIFT

These paintings were boxed and sent to the Redwood in November and December, 1861. The contents of the boxes appear both in the handwritten accession records and are transcribed in George Champlin Mason, *Annals of the Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, RI* (Newport: Redwood Library, 1891) 225-226.

Original Portraits

La Fayette, original, from Life, 1825. Box 2. [Cat. no. 114.]

Portrait of C. B. King, about 1856. Box 3. [1885 Catalogue lists as "Charles B. King, artist. Born in Newport, R.I., 1785; resided in Washington, D.C., from 1812 to the time of his death, March 19, 1862. This portrait painted by himself when about seventy years of age." Cat. no. 103.]

Portrait Copies

Rembrant's Mother, from Rembrant. Box 2. [Cat. no. 95.]

Earl of Warwick, from Vandyke. Box 3. [Cat. no. 104.]

Washington. Box 4. [1885 Catalogue lists as "Washington. From Stuart." Cat. no. 105. The Redwood Library owns another painting of Washington copied from Stuart, in an oval format, which the Index of Paintings (#68) declares King also gave to the Redwood in 1861. However, it does not appear on any of the nineteenth-century lists.]

Other Genres – Originals

Chilian Strawberries, raised by J. C. Calhoun. Box 4. [Possibly 1885 Catalogue entry "Fruit piece; cherries and strawberries." Cat. no. 161.]

Fruit Piece, apples, etc. Box 4. [1885 Catalogue lists as "Fruit piece; apples, pears and grapes." Cat. no. 162.]

Gambler. Box 2. [1885 Catalogue lists as "The Gambler. Original." Cat. no. 93.]

Girl Reading a Love Letter by Lamp-light. Box 4. [1885 Catalogue lists as "Girl reading love-letter by lamp-light. Original." Cat. no. 96.]

Girl Taking Food to a Prisoner. Box 4. [1885 Catalogue lists as "Girl taking food to a prisoner. Original." Cat. no. 100.]

Grandfather's Hobby. Box 3. [1885 Catalogue lists as "Grandfather's hobby. Original." Cat. no. 5.]

Interior of a Ropewalk. Box 5. [Cat. no. 17.]

Itinerant Artist. Box 1. [Cat. no. 15.]

Joseph. Box 4. [Cat. no. 226.]

Lazy Lawrence. Box 3. [1885 Catalogue lists as "Lazy Lawrence and Jim. (Miss Edgeworth's Parents' Assistant.) Original." Cat. no. 150.] See this link: http://www.online-literature.com/maria-edgeworth/parents-assistant/ The story (*The Parent's Assistant*) is by Maria Edgeworth and there is a painting of her very similar in tone to King's work.

"Long Wished for Come at Last." Box 4. [1885 Catalogue lists as "'Long-wished-for come at last.' Girl with miniature and letter. Original." Cat. no. 148.]

Rachel Envying her Sister. Box 4. [1885 Catalogue lists as "Rachel envying her sister. Original." Cat. no. 155.]

Rip Van Winkle, Returning from a Lounge. Box 5. [Cat. no. 13.]

Spanish Melon. Box 4. [1885 Catalogue lists as “Fruit piece; melons.” Cat. no. 160.]

The Young Dragoon. Box 2. [1885 Catalogue lists as “The young dragoon. Original.” Cat. no. 92.]

Other Genres – Copies

Ceyx and Alcyone, from Wilson. Box 1. [1885 Catalogue lists as “Ceyx and Alcyone. From Wilson.” Cat. no. 4.]

Infant St. John, from Reynolds. Box 4. [Cat. no. 154.]

Mary Magdalena, from Guido. Box 2. [Cat. no. 98.]

River Po, copy from Claude. Box 3. [1885 Catalogue lists as “River Po in Italy. Copy from Claude.” Cat. no. 2]

Sigsmunda and the Heart of the Lover, from Correggio. Box 2. [1885 Catalogue lists as “Sigismunda, weeping over the heart of Tancred. Copy from Correggio.” Cat. no. 87.]

Telemacus on the Isle of Calypso. Box 1. [1885 Catalogue lists as “Telemachus and Mentor, shipwrecked on the Isle of Calypso. Copy from West. Cat. no. 16.]

Venus and Adonis, from Titian. Box 1. [1885 Catalogue lists as “Venus endeavoring to prevent Adonis from going to the chase. Copy from Titian. The head of Adonis was intended for the likeness of Philip 2d, King of Spain for whom the original was painted.” Cat. no. 18.]

Other Genres – Unknown

Bust of Dead Mother. Box 5. [Cat. no. 9.]

Conscience makes Cowards. Box 2. [1885 Catalogue lists as “‘Conscience makes cowards.’” Cat. no. 97.]

Costume, time of Charlemagne. Box 4. [Cat. no. 94.]

Dying Soldier. Box 2. [1885 Catalogue lists as “Dying soldier in armor.” Cat. no. 207.]

Fish. Box 2. [Possibly 1885 Catalogue entry “Basket with beef and Poultry.” Cat. no. 163. There is no other relevant entry.]

Grapes. Box 2. [1885 Catalogue lists as “Fruit piece; grapes and pears.” Cat. no. 159.]

House of Tasso, at Sorento. Box 3. [1885 Catalogue lists as “House of Torquate Tasso, at Sorrento, near Naples.” Cat. no. 75.]

I Hope I See you Well. Box 3. [1885 Catalogue lists as “‘I hope I see you well.’” Cat. no. 225.]

Industry and Idleness. Box 3. [Cat. no. 151.]

I Will be a Soldier. Box 5. [1885 Catalogue lists as “‘I will be a soldier.’ Little child with sword and gun.” Cat. no. 12.]

Prayer. Box 4. [Possibly 1885 Catalogue entry “Mother praying over her sleeping child.” Cat. no. 191.]

Snow Storm. Box 2. [1885 Catalogue lists as “Snow storm. ‘No place like home.’” Cat. no. 217.]

“There’s no place like home.” Box 2. [Likely the same as “Snow Storm” above.]

Vegetables. Box 2. [Cat. no. 164.]

View in Italy, Environs of Milan. Box 1. [1885 Catalogue lists as “Environs of Milan, Italy.” Cat. no. 3.]

Way of the World. Box 3. [1885 Catalogue lists as “‘Way of the world.’ Original.” Cat. no. 73.]

1862 BEQUEST

This list appears in George Champlin Mason, *Annals of the Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, R.I* (Newport, R.I.: Redwood Library, 1891) 233-236.

Original Portraits

Fanny Adams, granddaughter of John Quincy Adams. No. 12 [Cat. no. 139.]

Mr. Corcoran. No. 34. [1885 Catalogue lists as "William Corcoran, of Washington." Cat. no. 63.]

Dr. Lovel. CBK. No. 28. [1885 Catalogue lists as "Doctor Joseph Lovell. Born in Massachusetts; graduated at Harvard College, 1807; Surgeon-General, US., 1818; died, 1836." Cat. no. 6.]

A Creek Boy. No. 43. [1885 Catalogue lists as "Mistippee, son of Yoholo Micco, a Creek Boy." Cat. no. 176.]

Male Indian. No. 46. [Several 1885 Catalogue entries for American Indian sitters do not have corresponding references to earlier paintings. See cat. nos. 165, 166, 167, 168, and 175.]

Male Indian. No. 47. [Several 1885 Catalogue entries for American Indian sitters do not have corresponding references to earlier paintings. See cat. nos.165, 166, 167, 168, and 175.]

Mrs. Lovel. No. 63. [1885 Catalogue lists as "Mrs. Dr. Lovell." Cat. no. 141.]

Howard Paine. No. 15. [1885 Catalogue lists as "John Howard Payne, author of 'Home, sweet home.' Born in New York, 1792; died in Tunis, 1852." Cat. no. 60.]

Eagle of Delight – Indian. No. 44. [Likely a confusion of title. Probably 1885 Catalogue entry "Rant-che-wai-me, Female Flying Pigeon, Ioway." Cat. no. 177.]

Red Jacket. No. 48. [Cat. no. 174.]

Republican Pawnee. No. 45. [1885 Catalogue lists as “Peskelechaco, or Republican Pawnee. A Pawnee chief, killed by a war party of the Osages, 1826.” Cat. no. 80.]

Portrait of Miss Simmes. CBK. No. 2. [1885 Catalogue lists as “Miss Semmes, of ____,” cat. no. 30.]

Portrait of Charles B. King, at the age of 30 years. CBK. No. 4. [1885 Catalogue lists as “Charles B. King. By himself at the age of 30. Cat. no. 62.]

Mr. Van Rensselaer. No. 33. [Cat. no. 85.]

White Cloud. No. 52. [Unknown. King painted Mahaskah (White Cloud), an Ioway Indian, in 1824. This entry may reflect that sitter, though it is not reflected in any of the Redwood records. Possibly 1885 Catalogue entry “Portrait,” cat. no. 248, 250, or 251.]

Portrait Copies

John Adams, after Stuart. No. 29. [1885 Catalogue lists as “John Adams, late in life. From Stuart.” Cat. no. 106. Could also be “John Adams. Copied from Stuart.” Cat. no. 109.]

Children, from Sir T. Lawrence. No. 66. [1885 Catalogue lists as “‘Nature.’ Children of C. B. Calmady, Esq. From Sir Thomas Lawrence.” Cat. no. 10.]

Christopher Columbus. No. 58. [Cat. no. 220.]

Cortez. No. 60. [1885 Catalogue lists as “Hernando Cortez. Born, 1485; died, 1547.” Cat. no. 56. Could also be “Head of Hernando Cortez. From Giorgione?” Cat. no. 58.]

Lord Crewe in Costume of Henry VIII, after Reynolds. No. 24. [Cat. no. 78.]

Head; copied from Vandyck. No. 14. [Cat. no. 157.]

Pope Innocent X., from Velasques. No. 59. [1885 Catalogue lists as "Pope Innocent X. Died, 1655. From Velasquez." Cat. no. 54.]

Portrait of President Jefferson. No. 22. [1885 Catalogue lists as "Jefferson. Copied from T. Sully's portrait." Cat. no. 107.]

Portrait of President Madison. No. 21. [1885 Catalogue lists as "Madison. From Stuart." Cat. no. 108.]

Mrs. Mason and Child, from Sully. No. 37. [Cat. no. 67.]

Earl of Pembroke, from Vandyke. No. 42. [Cat. no. 33.]

Sir Joshua Reynolds. No. 36. [Cat. no. 158.]

Other Genres – Originals

Bredon's Cottage; Harper's Ferry. No. 70. [Cat. no. 261.]

Costume. No. 57. [Possibly 1885 Catalogue entry "Costume of a French princess, A.D. 1000." Cat. no. 55.]

Costume of Female of Quality. No. 61. [1885 Catalogue lists as "Costume of female of quality; time of Carolus 6th of France." Cat. no. 144.]

Costume; time of Charlemagne. No. 62. [Possibly 1885 Catalogue entry "Costume, Carolus 1st." Cat. no. 66.]

Female Indian at her Toilet. No. 64. [1885 Catalogue lists as "Indian girl at her toilet." Cat. no. 219.]

Great Falls, on the Potomac. No. 72. [Cat. no. 182.]

Hadley's Falls; New York. No. 71. [Cat. no. 181.]

Hard Lesson – original. No. 11. [Cat. no. 138.]

Landscape – Trees. No. 73. [Does not appear in 1885 catalogue.]

The Maniac. No. 25. [1885 Catalogue lists as "Madness; or, the maniac." Cat. no. 215.]

The Poor Artist's Closet. No. 26. [1885 Catalogue lists as "Poor artist's closet; or, Sale of artist's effects." Cat. no. 214.]

View on the Wissahickon, near Philadelphia. No. 19. [1885 Catalogue lists as "View on the Wissahicon creek, which enters the Schuylkill river about five miles above Fairmount waterworks, Philadelphia." Cat. no. 146.]

View on the Potomac; Georgetown in sight. No. 20. [1885 Catalogue lists as "Sunset view on the Potomac, near Georgetown, D.C." Cat. no. 147.]

Other Genres – Copies

Girl Playing with a Cat and Kitten. No. 1. [Possibly 1885 Catalogue entry "Girl and cat. From an engraving." Cat. no. 221.]

Landscape, after Orizonte. No. 53. [Cat. no. 179.]

Landscape, Snow, after Orizonte. No. 54. [Cat. no. 180.]

Large Landscape, from a Spanish picture. No. 49. [Cat. no. 52.]

Laura Bianchi – Titian's Mistress. No. 3. [Cat. no. 222.]

Lot and His Daughters, after an old master. No. 30. [Cat. no. 223.]

Media, a copy from Guido. No. 5. [Cat. no. 216.]

Moline, from Claude. No. 50. [1885 Catalogue lists as "The marriage festival of Isaac and Rebecca; or 'La Molina.' Copy from Claude Lorraine." Cat. no. 70.]

The Wise Man. No. 27. [1885 Catalogue lists as "'The Sage.' Copy from J. E. Schenau, 1770." Cat. no. 35.]

Other Genres - Unknown

Bargaining for a Kiss. No. 16. [Cat. no. 64.]

Blind Girl Reading. No. 32. [Cat. no. 31.]

Dead Bird. No. 51. [1884 Catalogue lists as “Two young ladies and their dead bird.” Cat. no. 34.]

Death. No. 55. [Cat. no. 206.]

Eve. No. 10. [Cat. no. 173.]

Eve at the Fountain; back view. No. 65. [1885 Catalogue lists as “Eve at the fountain. (Back view.)” Cat. no. 149.]

A Female Lashed to a Wreck. No. 40. [Cat. no. 199.]

Female and Swan. No. 67. [Does not appear in 1885 Catalogue.]

Girl at the Grave of Fanny. No. 31. [Cat. no. 29.]

Interior of a Church. No. 69. [Cat. no. 259.]

Judith Meditating the Murder of Holofernes. No. 38. [A similar painting appears in the 1885 Catalogue, with a completely different attribution: “Judith with the head of Holofernes. Copy by Wall from Cristofano Allori. Deposited by Mrs. Dr. Sands.” Cat. no. 252.]

Juvenile St. Cecilia. No. 6. [1885 Catalogue lists as “Juvenile St. Cecilia, A.D. 280.” Cat. no. 36.]

Kiss Me if You Dare. No. 13. [1885 Catalogue lists as “‘Kiss me if you dare!’” Cat. no. 143.]

A Lady Asleep Under an Umbrella. No. 68. [1885 Catalogue lists as “Lady sleeping under umbrella on the sea shore.” Cat. no. 224.]

Landscape. No. 39. [Possibly 1885 Catalogue entry “Landscape, with woman and child.” Cat. no. 186. Could also be “Landscape.” Cat. no. 263.]

Love Letter – three figures. No. 75. [1885 Catalogue lists as “The love-letter.” Cat. no. 260.]

Neglected Wife. No. 41. [Cat. no. 32.]

Old Witch by Firelight. No. 17. [1885 Catalogue lists as “Old witch by firelight. (Sarah Prince.)” Cat. no. 218.]

School Girl, writing. No. 35. [1885 Catalogue lists as “School girl writing composition.” Cat. no. 53.]

A Ship on Fire at Night. No. 23. [Cat. no. 71.]

Silenus. No. 18. [Cat. no. 142.]

Slave on Sale. No. 9. [Cat. no. 137.]

A Sleeping Girl. No. 56. [1885 Catalogue lists as “Sleep, or Sleeping girl.” Cat. no. 205.]

Sleeping Mother. No. 7. [Cat. no. 140.]

Paintings by other Artists

Flower Piece. No. 8. [Possibly 1885 Catalogue entry “Flower piece. (Old.)” Cat. no. 156.]

Flower Piece. No. 74. [Possibly 1885 Catalogue entry “Flower piece. By old master.” Cat. no. 185.]

1885 CATALOGUE PAINTINGS WITH NO EARLIER CORRESPONDENCE

The concert; forming part of the painting called the Rich man’s feast. From Bonifaccio. Cat. no. 253.

The daughter of Jephthah. Cat. no. 257.

Girl and Parrot. Artist, Thomas Sully, 1832. Cat. no. 45.

Girl with water jug. Cat. no. 264.

Madonna della Seggiola. Copy from Raphael. Cat. no. 262.

Black Hawk, or Makataimeshekiahkiah, a Suakie Brave. CBK. Cat. no. 168.

Mary Magdalen. Cat. no. 265.

Moa-na-hon-ga, Ioway Chief. CBK. Cat. no. 165.

“Oh! ‘tis so cold!” Woman putting a child into the bath. Cat. no. 77.

Portrait. Cat. no. 248.

Portrait. Cat. no. 250.

Portrait. Cat. no. 251.

Pow-a-sheek, Fox Chief. CBK. Cat. no. 175.

Rustic scene. Copied from Nicholas Berchem. Cat. no. 83.

Wa-baun-see, chief of the Pottawottomies of the Prairie. CBK. Cat. no. 166.

Wakechai, or Crouching Eagle, Saukie chief. CBK. Cat. no. 167.

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Appendix Two - Illustrations

Figure 1. Edward Savage, *The Washington Family*, 1796. National Gallery of Art, Mellon Collection.

Figure 2. Charles Willson Peale, *The Artist in His Museum*, 1822. Oil on canvas, 103 ¾ x 79 7/8 in. Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts collection.

Figure 3. John Vanderlyn, *Ariadne Asleep on the Island of Naxos,* 1809-1814. Oil on canvas, 68 ½ x 87 in. Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts collection.

Figure 4. John Vanderlyn, *Marius Amidst the Ruins of Carthage,* n.d. Oil on canvas, 87 x 68 ½ in. M. H. De Young Memorial Museum collection.

Figure 5. John Vanderlyn, *The Palace and Gardens of Versailles*, det., 1818-1819. Oil on canvas, 12 x 165 ft. overall. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of the Senate House Association, Kingston, N.Y., 1952.

Figure 6. Rembrandt Peale, *The Roman Daughter,* 1811. Oil on canvas, 84 ¾ x 62 7/8 in. Smithsonian American Art Museum, gift of the James Smithson Society.

Figure 7. Theodore Gericault, *Wreck of the Frigate Ship Medusa,* 1819. Oil on canvas, approximately 16 x 23 ½ ft. Musée du Louvre collection.

Figure 8. Rembrandt Peale, *The Court of Death*, 1820. Oil on canvas, 138 x 281 in. The Detroit Institute of Arts collection, gift of George H. Scripps.

Figure 9. Thomas Sully, *The Interior of the Capuchin Chapel in the Piazza Barberini (after Marius Granet)*, 1821. Oil on canvas, 68.5 x 50.5 in. Private collection. Reproduced from www.the-athenaeum.org/art/detail.php?ID=16352.

Figure 10. Henry Sargent, *The Dinner Party*, c. 1821. Oil on canvas, 61 5/8 x 49 ¾ in. The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, gift of Mrs. Horatio A. Lamb in memory of Mr. and Mrs. Winthrop Sargent.

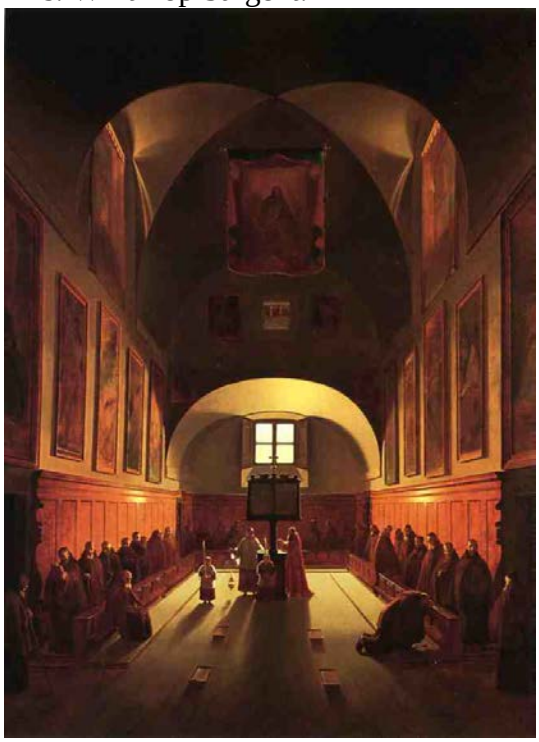


Figure 11. Paul Delaroche, with Charles Béranger, *Hémicycle des Beaux-Arts*, c. 1841; repainted and signed 1853. Oil on canvas, 41.6 x 257.3 cm. The Walters Art Museum, bequest of Henry Walters, 1931.

Figure 12. Charles Bird King, *Head after Van Dyck,* n.d. Private collection. Photograph courtesy of William Vareika Fine Arts, Newport, Rhode Island.

Figure 13. Paulus Pontius after Anthony van Dyck, *Hendrick van den Bergh,* engraving, 14 x 11 3/8 in. Engraving in the collection of the Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island.

Figure 14. Engraving after Sir Thomas Lawrence, *The Calmady Children,* n.d. Engraving in the collection of the Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island.

Figure 15. Charles Bird King, *The Calmady Children (after Sir Thomas Lawerence),* c. 1835. Oil on canvas, 33 x 30 in. Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island.

Figure 16. Engraving after Sir Joshua Reynolds, *A Gypsey Boy,* n.d. Engraving in the collection of the Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island.

Figure 17. Engraving after Sir Joshua Reynolds, *The Fortune Teller,* n.d. Engraving in the collection of the Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island.

Figure 18. Engraving after Sir Joshua Reynolds, *The Strawberry Girl*, n.d. Engraving in the collection of the Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island.

Figure 19. Engraving after Sir Joshua Reynolds, *Infant St. John*, n.d. Engraving in the collection of the Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island.

Figure 20. Engraving after Sir Anthony van Dyck, *Earl of Warwick,* n.d. Engraving in the collection of the Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island.

Figure 21. Engraving after Correggio, *Sigismunda with the Heart of the Lover,* n.d. Engraving in the collection of the Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island.

Figure 22. Engraving of cartoon after Raphael, *Elymas, the Sorcerer,* n.d. Engraving in the collection of the Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island.

Figure 23. Charles Bird King, *Grandfather's Hobby,* c. 1824-1830. Oil on canavs, 36 ¼ x 28 ¼ in. The Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, Winterthur, Delaware.

Figure 24. Engraving after Villeneuve, *Vue Prise en Savoi,* n.d. Engraving in the collection of the Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island.

Figure 25. Richard Wilson, *Ceyx and Alcyone*, 1768. Oil on canvas, 101.5 x 127 cm. National Museum, Wales.

Figure 26. Benjamin West, *Telemachus and Mentor, Shipwrecked on the Isle of Calypso.* Oil on canvas, approximately 43 x 56 in. Collection Travis & Calhoun Attorneys and Counselors, Dallas, TX.

Figure 27. Sir Joshua Reynolds, *John Hunter,* 1786. Collection The Crystal Gallery, Hunterian Museum.

Figure 28. Sir Joshua Reynolds, *Lord Crewe, in the Character of Henry VIII*, 1775. Oil on canvas, 55.1 x 43.3 in. Private collection.

Figure 29. Charles Willson Peale, *Rachel Weeping*, 1772; enlarged 1777, retouched 1818. Oil on canvas, 36 13/16 x 32 1/16 in. Philadelphia Museum of Art, gift of The Barra Foundation, Inc., 1977.

Figure 30. Charles Willson Peale, *Exhumation of the Mastadon,* 1806-1808. Oil on canvas, 50 x 62 ½ in. Baltimore City Life Museum Collection, Maryland Historical Society.

Figure 31. Charles Bird King, *John Quincy Adams,* 1819-1821. Oil on canvas, 36 x 28 in. Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island.

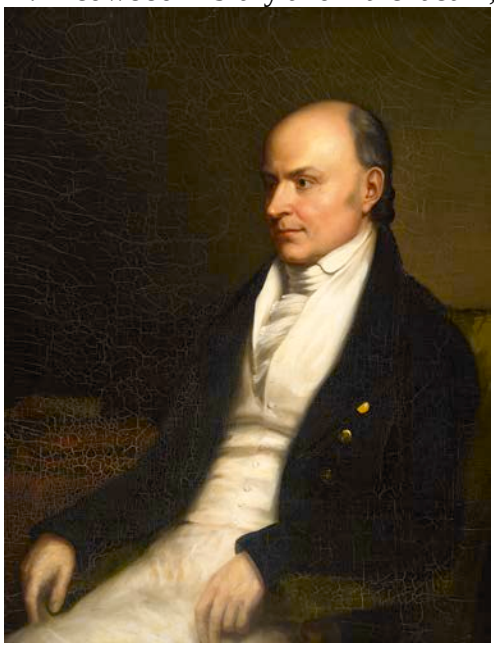


Figure 32. Charles Bird King, *John C. Calhoun,* 1818-1820. Oil on canvas, 36 x 28 in. Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island.

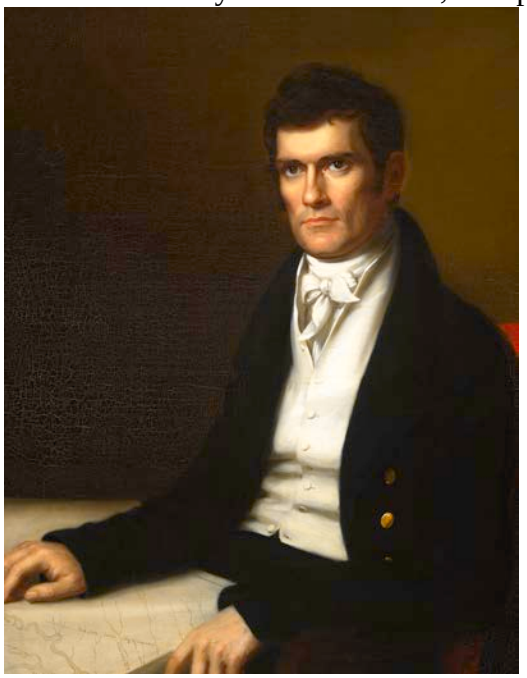


Figure 33. Charles Bird King, *John Adams (after Gilbert Stuart),* 1827. Oil on canvas, 30 x 25 in. Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island.

Figure 34. Charles Bird King, *Thomas Jefferson Medallion Portrait (after Gilbert Stuart)*, n.d. Oil on wood, 21 x 17 in. Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island.

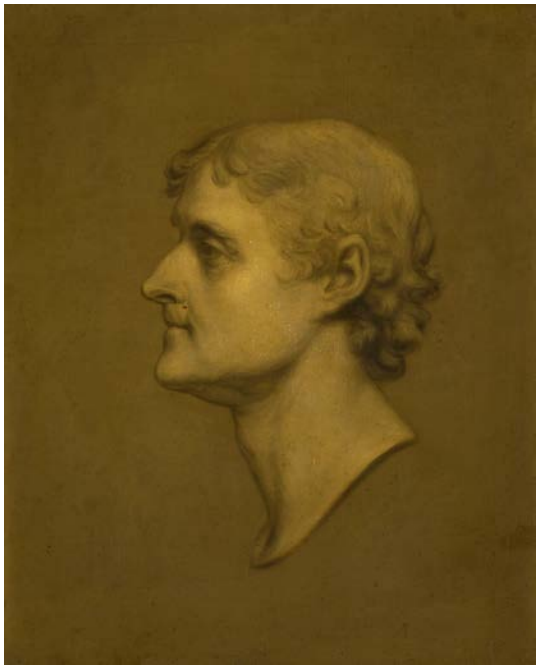


Figure 35. Charles Bird King, *Mrs. Delia Stewart (after Gilbert Stuart)*, n.d. Oil on India silk, 18 x 14 in. Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island.

Figure 36. Charles Bird King, *Mrs. Joseph Lovel*, n.d. Oil on canvas, 24 x 20 in. Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island.

Figure 37. Charles Bird King, *Mrs. Stockton, of Virginia*, n.d. Oil on canvas, 30 x 25 in. Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island.

Figure 38. Charles Bird King, *Margaret Bayard (Mrs. Samuel Harrison) Smith,* 1829. Oil on canvas, 30 x 25 in. Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island.

Figure 39. Charles Bird King, *Costume, Time of Charlemagne,* c. 1838. Oil on canvas, 30 x 25 in. Private collection (Cosentino, *Paintings of Charles Bird King,* Cat. No. 609).

Figure 40. Charles Bird King, *The Castle-Builder*, 1829. Oil on canvas, 30 x 25 in. Private Collection (Cosentino, *Paintings of Charles Bird King*, Cat. No. 605).

Figure 41. Charles Bird King, *Louisa Catherine Johnson (Mrs. John Quincy) Adams*, c. 1824. Oil on canvas, 51 ½ x 39 5/8 in. Smithsonian American Art Museum Adams-Clement Collection, gift of Mary Louisa Adams Clement in memory of her mother, Louisa Catherine Adams Clement.

Figure 42. Charles Bird King, *Henry Clay,* 1821. Oil on canvas, 36 1/8 x 28 1/8 in. Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

Figure 43. Charles Bird King, *Miss Satterlee,* c. 1830-1839. Oil on wood, 17 ½ x 14 ½ in. Smithsonian American Art Museum, gift of Albert M. Pitcher, Jr.

Figure 44. Charles Bird King, *Gertrude Murray Shepard,* c. 1840. Oil on canvas, 36 x 30 in. Collection William B. Shepard, Edenton, N.C. (Cosentino, *Paintings of Charles Bird King*, Cat. No. 235).

Figure 45. Charles Bird King, *Indian Girl at Her Toilet,* c. 1835. Oil on canvas, 26 ½ x 21 ¾ in. Private collection (Cosentino, *The Paintings of Charles Bird King*, Cat. No. 620).

Figure 46. Charles Bird King, *Young Omahaw, War Eagle, Little Missouri, and Pawnees,* 1822. Oil on canvas, 28 x 36 1/8 in. Smithsonian American Art Museum, gift of Miss Helen Barlow.

Figure 47. Charles Bird King, *Hayne Hudjihini,* 1822. Oil on wood, 17 x 13 ¾ in. Current location unknown.

Figure 48. Charles Bird King, *Shaumonekusse*, 1822. Oil on wood, 17 ½ x 13 ½ in. Current location unknown.

Figure 49. Charles Bird King, *Petalesharro (Generous Chief)*, 1822. Oil on wood, 17 ½ x 13 ¾ in. Current location unknown.

Figure 50. Charles Bird King, *Ongpatonga (Big Elk),* 1822. Oil on wood, 17 ½ x 13 ¾ in. Newberry Library, Chicago, IL.

Figure 51. Charles Bird King, *Rantchewaime (Female Flying Pigeon),* 1824. Oil on wood, 17 ½ x 13 ½ in. Current location unknown.

Figure 52. Charles Bird King, *Choncape (Big Kansas)*, 1822. Oil on wood, 17 ½ x 13 ¾ in. Danish National Museum, Copenhagen.

Figure 53. Charles Bird King, *Pushmataha*, 1824. Oil on Wood, 17 ¼ x 13 ¼ in. Current location unknown.

Figure 54. Lithograph after Charles Bird King, *Pushmataha*, 1836-1844. Published in Thomas L. McKenney and James Hall, *History of the Indian Tribes of North America, with Biographical Sketches and Anecdotes of the Principal Chiefs. Embellished with One Hundred and Twenty Portraits, from the Indian Gallery in the Department of War, at Washington.* 3 vols. Philadelphia, 1836-1844.

Figure 55. Charles Bird King, *Nesouaquoit (Bear in the Fork of a Tree)*, 1837. Oil on canvas, 35 ½ x 29 ½ in. Stark Museum of Art, Orange, TX.

Figure 56. Charles Bird King, *Keokuk (Watchful Fox)*, 1829. Oil on canvas, 38 ½ x 26 ½ in. Current location unknown.

Figure 57. Lithograph after James Otto Lewis, *Keokuk*, 1835. Published in James Otto Lewis, *Aboriginal Port-Folio* (Philadelphia: 1835).

Figure 58. Charles Bird King, *Wanata (after James Otto Lewis)*, 1826. Oil on canvas, 38 ½ x 26 ½ in. Current location unknown.

Figure 59. Lithograph after James Otto Lewis, *Wanata*, 1835. Published in James Otto Lewis, *Aboriginal Port-Folio* (Philadelphia: 1835).

Figure 60. Charles Bird King, *Keokuk*, 1827. Oil on wood, 17 ½ x 13 ¾ in. Current location unknown.

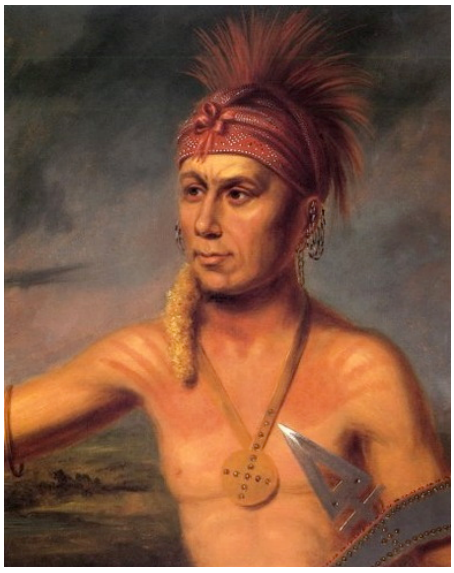


Figure 61. Lithograph after Charles Bird King, *Keokuk*, 1836-1844. Published in Thomas L. McKenney and James Hall, *History of the Indian Tribes of North America, with Biographical Sketches and Anecdotes of the Principal Chiefs. Embellished with One Hundred and Twenty Portraits, from the Indian Gallery in the Department of War, at Washington.* 3 vols. Philadelphia, 1836-1844.

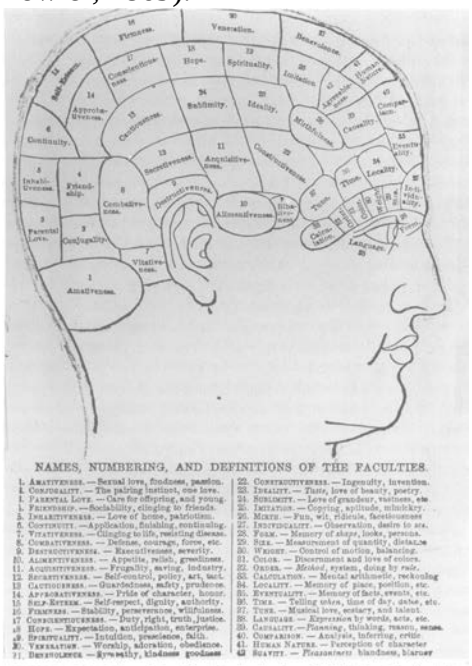
Figure 62. Thomas Easterly, *Keokuk,* 1847. Daguerreotype. National Museum of American History, Behring Center, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

Figure 63. Johann Caspar Lavater, *Plate with Profiles,* 1800. Johann Caspar Lavater, *The Whole Works of Lavater on Physiognomy* (London: printed for W. Butters, & sold by W. Simmonds, Paternoster Row, 1800) Volume IV, 45 (opposite p.245).

Figure 64. Charles Bird King, *Charles Carroll,* n.d. Oil on canvas, 30 x 28 in. Private Collection (Cosentino, *The Paintings of Charles Bird King*, Cat. No. 32).

Figure 65. Charles Bird King, *William Henry Crawford*, *Secretary of Treasury*, 1817-1824. Oil on canvas, 37 x 28 in. Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island.

Figure 66. Frontisepiece from O.S. Fowler, *The Practical Phrenologist* (Boston: O.S. Fowler, 1869).



NAMES, NUMBERING, AND DEFINITIONS OF THE FACULTIES.

1. Amativeness. — Sexual love, fondness, passion.
2. Conjugality. — The pairing instinct, one love.
3. Parental Love. — Care for offspring, and young.
4. Friendship. — Sociability, clinging to friends.
5. Inhabitiveness. — Love of home, patriotism.
6. Continuity. — Application, finishing, continuing.
7. Vitativeness. — Clinging to life, resisting disease.
8. Combativeness. — Defense, courage, force, etc.
9. Destructiveness. — Executiveness, severity.
10. Alimentiveness. — Appetite, relish, greediness.
11. Acquisitiveness. — Frugality, saving, industry.
12. Secretiveness. — Self-control, policy, art, tact.
13. Cautiousness. — Guardedness, safety, prudence.
14. Approbativeness. — Pride of character, honor.
15. Self-Esteem. — Self-respect, dignity, authority.
16. Firmness. — Stability, perseverance, willfulness.
17. Conscientiousness. — Duty, right, truth, justice.
18. Hope. — Expectation, anticipation, enterprise.
19. Spirituality. — Intuition, prescience, faith.
20. Veneration. — Worship, adoration, obedience.
21. Benevolence. — Sympathy, kindness goodness
22. Constructiveness. — Ingenuity, invention.
23. Ideality. — Taste, love of beauty, poetry.
24. Sublimity. — Love of grandeur, vastness, etc.
25. Imitation. — Copying, aptitude, mimickry.
26. Mirth. — Fun, wit, ridicule, facetiousness
27. Individuality. — Observation, desire to see.
28. Form. — Memory of *shape*, looks, persons.
29. Size. — Measurement of quantity, distance
30. Weight. — Control of motion, balancing.
31. Color. — Discernment and love of colors.
32. Order. — Method, system, doing by rule.
33. Calculation. — Mental arithmetic, reckoning
34. Locality. — Memory of place, position, etc.
35. Eventuality. — Memory of facts, events, etc.
36. Time. — Telling when, time of day, dates, etc.
37. Tune. — Musical love, ecstacy, and talent.
38. Language. — *Expression* by words, acts, etc.
39. Causality. — Planning, thinking, reason, sense.
40. Comparison. — Analysis, Inferring, critic
41. Human Nature. — Perception of character
42. Suavity. — Pleasantness blandness, blarney

FIGURE 1.7. *Fowler's Phrenological Head*, frontispiece from O. S. Fowler, *The Practical Phrenologist* (Boston: O. S. Fowler, 1869)

Figure 67. Asa Ames, *Phrenological Head,* c. 1850. Paint on wood, 16 3/8 x 13 x 7 1/8 in. American Folk Art Museum, bequest of Jeanette Virgin.

Figure 68. Charles Bird King, *Self-Portrait,* 1815. Oil on canvas, 30 x 25 in. Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island.

Figure 69. Charles Bird King, *Makataimeshekiakiah (Black Hawk),* 1833. Oil on wood, 23 x 19 ¾ in. Current location unknown.

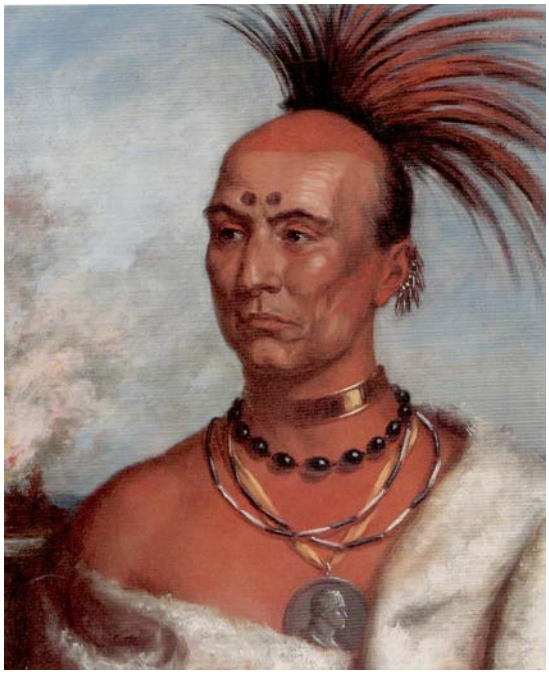


Figure 70. Plate accompanying the essay "Phrenological Developments and Character of the Celebrated Indian Chief and Warrior, Black Hawk," *American Phrenological Journal and Miscellany* I (1838): 52-53.

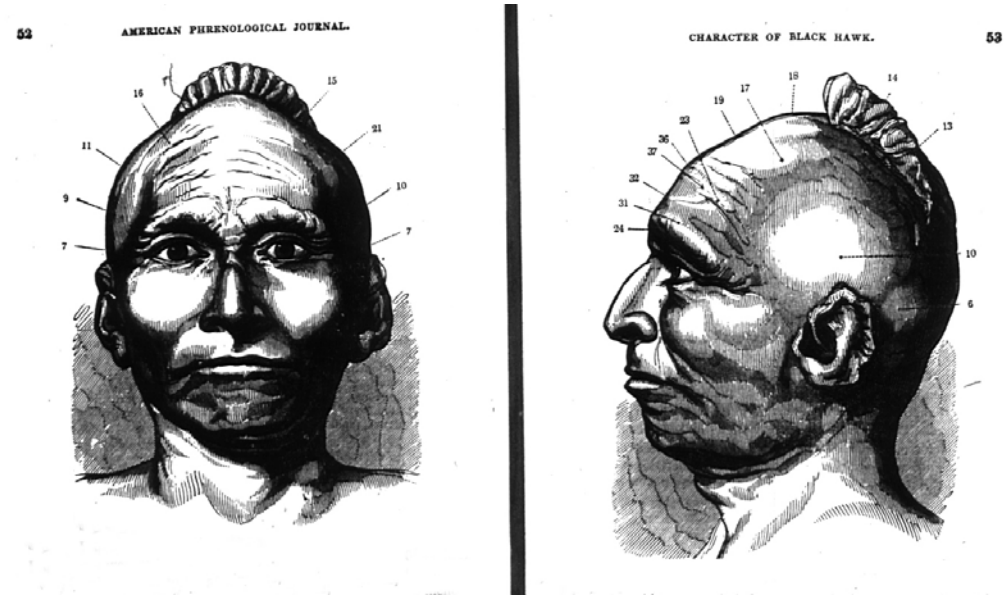


Figure 71. Lithograph after James Otto Lewis, *Nah-Shaw-a-Gaa (The White Dog's Son, Pottawatomie Chief),* 1835. Published in James Otto Lewis, *Aboriginal Port-Folio* (Philadelphia: 1835).

Figure 72. John Valentine Haidt, *The First Fruits,* n.d. Oil on canvas, 41 ½ x 50 ½ in. Archives of the Moravian Church, Bethlehem, PA.

Figure 73. Charles Willson Peale, *Thayendanegea (Joseph Brant),* 1797. Oil on canvas, 25 ½ x 21 3/8 in. Independence Hall, Philadelphia, PA.

Figure 74. Sir Anthony van Dyck, *Charles I*, c. 1635. Oil on canvas, 33 ¼ x 39 ¼ in. The Queen's Gallery, London.

Figure 75. Charles Bird King, *Peskelechaco,* 1822. Oil on wood, 17 ½ x 13 ¾ in. Collection William J. Williams, Cincinnati, OH (Cosentino, *The Paintings of Charles Bird King*, Cat. No. 411).

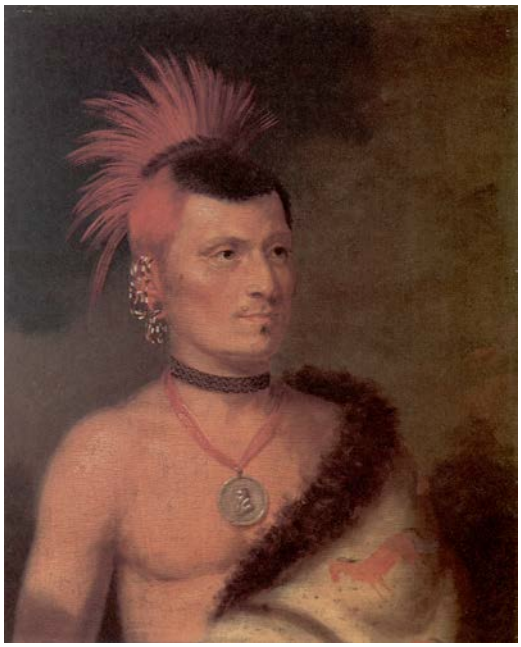


Figure 76. Charles Bird King, *Itinerant Artist,* c. 1825. Oil on canvas, 44 ¾ x 57 in. New York State Historical Association.

Figure 77. Charles Bird King, *Rip Van Winkle Returning from a Morning's Lounge,* c. 1825. Oil on canvas, 44 x 56 ¼ in. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, bequest of Maxim Karolik.

Figure 78. Charles Bird King, *Interior of a Ropewalk*, c. 1840. Oil on canvas, 39 x 54 ½ in. University of Virginia Art Museum, Charlottesville, VA.

Figure 79. Engraving after Adriaen van Ostade, *Tavern Scene*, n.d. Engraving in the collection of the Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island.

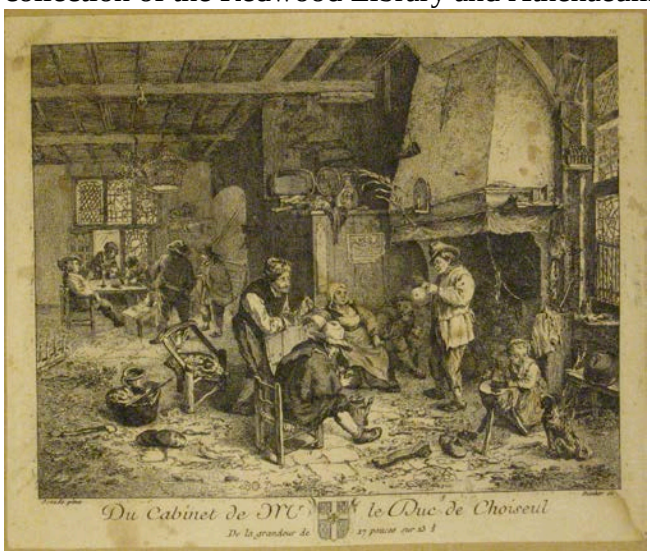


Figure 80. Undated nineteenth-century photograph, main reading room of the Redwood Library and Athenaeum. Photograph in the collection of the Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island.

Figure 81. Sir David Wilkie, *Village Politicians,* 1806. Oil on canvas, 57.2 x 74.9 cm. Collection of the Rt. Hon. The Earl of Mansfield and Mansfield.

Figure 82. Sir David Wilkie, *Blind Fiddler,* 1806. Oil on panel, 57.8 x 79.4 cm. Tate Gallery, London, UK.

Figure 83. John Lewis Krimmel, *Pepper-Pot: A Scene in the Philadelphia Market,* 1811. Oil on canvas, 19 ½ x 15 ½ in. Philadelphia Museum of Art, gift of Mrs. And Mrs. Edward B. Leisenring, Jr.

Figure 84. John Lewis Krimmel, *Blind Fiddler (after Sir David Wilkie),* 1812. Oil on canvas, 16 5/8 x 22 1/16 in. Terra Foundation for American Art, Daniel J. Terra Collection.

Figure 85. John Lewis Krimmel, *Quilting Frolic*, 1813. Oil on canvas, 16 ¾ x 22 3/16 in. The Henry Francis DuPont Winterthur Museum.

Figure 86. Jan Steen, *The Dissolute Household,* c. 1663-1664. Oil on canvas, 42 ½ x 35 ½ in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Jack and Bell Linsky Collection.

Figure 87. Etching and engraving after William Hogarth, *The Rake's Progress: Plate I,* 1735. 12 9/16 x 15 3/8 in. British Museum.

Figure 88. Gerrit Dou, *Still Life with a Boy Blowing Soap-bubbles,* c. 1635-1636. Oil on panel, 48 x 39.7 cm. National Museum of Western Art, Tokyo.

Figure 89. Frans van Mieris, *A Boy Blowing Bubbles*, 1663. Oil on panel, 25.5 x 19 cm. Royal Picture Gallery Mauritshuis, The Hague.

Figure 90. John Lewis Krimmel, *View of Center Square on the Fourth of July*, 1812. Oil on canvas, 23 x 29 1/8 in. The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts.

Figure 91. John Lewis Krimmel, *Merrymaking at a Wayside Inn*, 1811-1813. Watercolor and graphite on white laid paper, 7 1/8 x 9 3/16 in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund.

Figure 92. John Lewis Krimmel, *Black People's Prayer Meeting*, 1811-1813. Watercolor and pen and black ink on off-white wove paper, 6 9/16 x 9 15/16 in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund.

Figure 93. William Sidney Mount, *The Power of Music,* 1847. Oil on canvas, 17 x 21 in. The Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland, OH.

Figure 94. John Lewis Krimmel, *Election Scene. State House in Philadelphia*, 1815. Oil on canvas, 16 x 25 in. The Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum.

Figure 95. Charles Bird King, *Landscape with Catalogue*, 1828. Oil on canvas, 30 x 25 in. Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island.

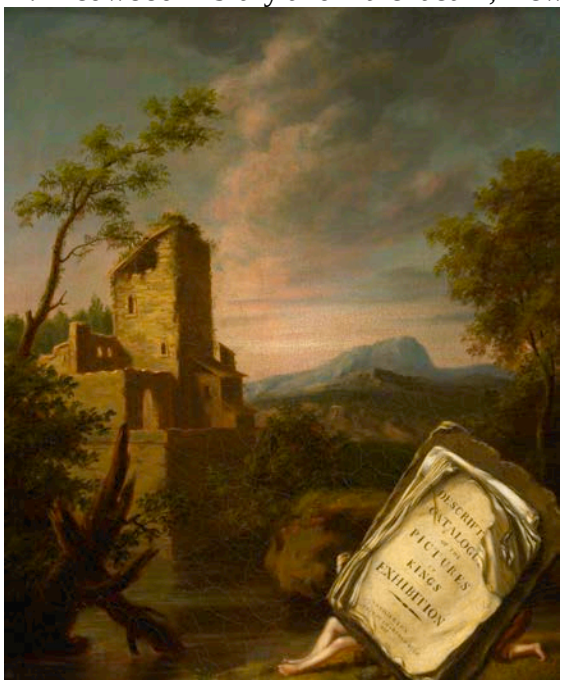


Figure 96. Charles Willson Peale, *Staircase Group,* 1795. Oil on cavas, 89 ½ x 39 3/8 in. Philadelphia Museum of Art, the George W. Elkins Collection.

Figure 97. Raphael Peale, *Venus Rising from the Sea – A Deception,* c. 1822. Oil on canvas, 29 1/8 x 24 1/8 in. The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, William Rockhill Nelson Trust.

Figure 98. Frederick Edwin Church, *Heart of the Andes*, 1859. Oil on canvas, 66 1/8 x 119 ¼ in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, bequest of Margaret E. Dows.

Figure 99. Charles Bird King, *Poor Artist's Cupboard*, c. 1815. Oil on panel, 29 13/16 x 27 13/16 in. Corcoran Gallery of Art.

Figure 100. Charles Bird King, *Vanity of the Artist's Dream*, 1830. Oil and graphite on canvas, 35 1/8 x 37 ¼ x 2 in. Harvard Art Museums/Fogg Museum, Gift of Grenville L. Winthrop, Class of 1886.

Figure 101. Charles Bird King, *Self-Portrait*, 1856-1858. Oil on canvas, 44 ½ x 34 in. Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island.

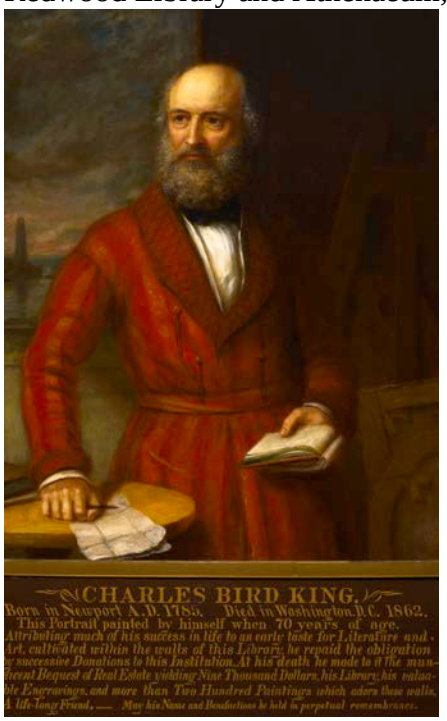


Figure 102. Charles Bird King, *Harper's Ferry, Looking Upstream*, c. 1815-1820. Oil on wood, 17 ¼ x 30 in. Unlocated (Cosentino, *The Paintings of Charles Bird King*, Cat. No. 509).

Figure 103. Charles Bird King, *Harper's Ferry, Government Work Lock on the Potomac,* c. 1815-1820. Oil on wood, 17 ¼ x 30 in. Unlocated (Cosentino, *The Paintings of Charles Bird King*, Cat. No. 508).

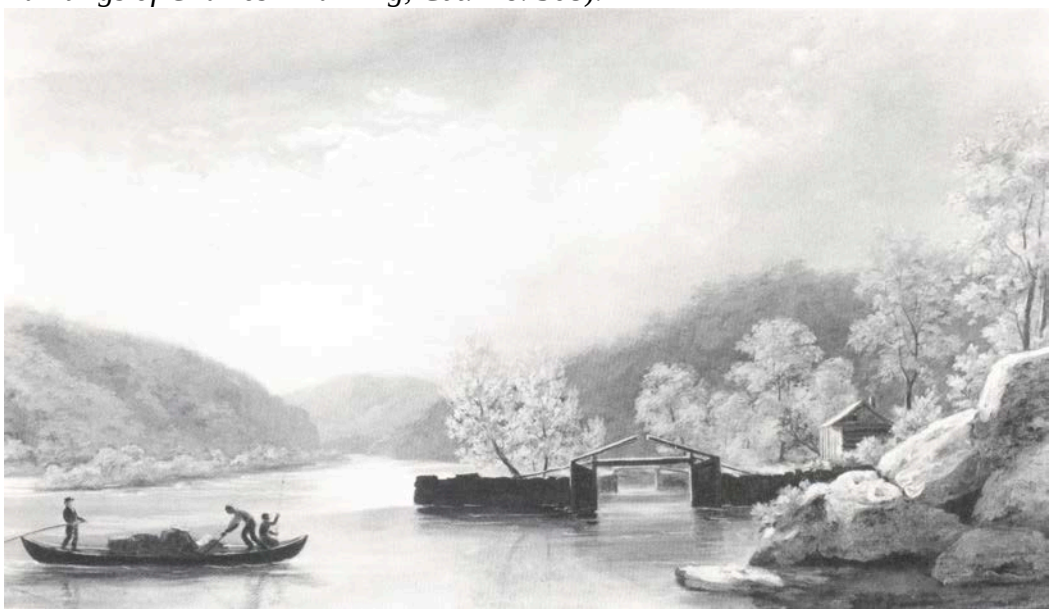
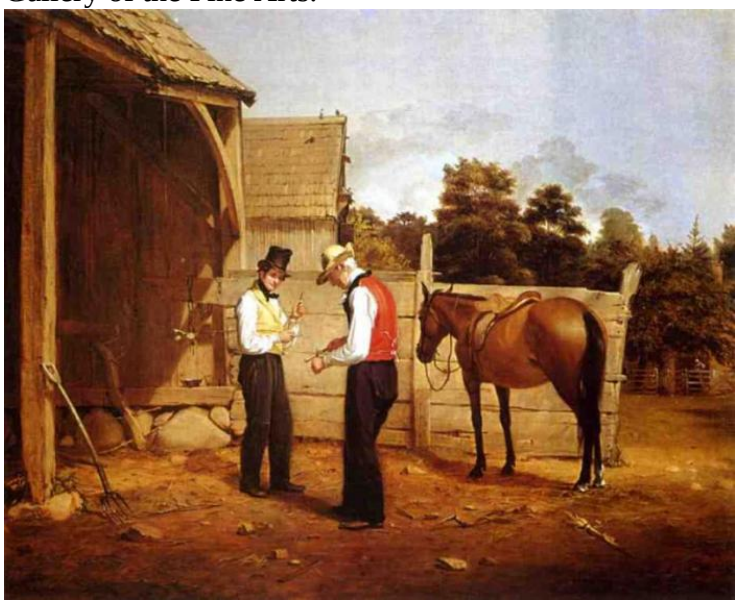


Figure 104. William Sidney Mount, *Bargaining for a Horse (Farmers Bargaining)*, 1835. Oil on canvas, 24 x 30 in. New-York Historical Society, gift of the New-York Gallery of the Fine Arts.



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